GOETHE'S "FAUST."

FAUST: A DRAMATIC POEM

BY GOETHE

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FAUST

A DRAMATIC POEM

BY GOETHE

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

THEODORE MARTIN

Sixth Edition

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS
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DEDICATION.

Ye come, dim forms, as in youth's early day
Ye blessed these eyes, which now so lonely grieve!
Still, still, to hold ye fast shall I essay,
Still let my heart to that delusion cleave?
Ye throng me round! Well! lord it how ye may,
As from the mists ye rise, that round me weave!
Ye waft a magic air, that shakes my breast
With youth's tumultuous, yet divine, unrest.

Visions ye bring with you of happy days,
And many a dear, dear, shade ascends to view;
Like some faint haunting chime of ancient lays,
Come love, first love, and friendship back with you;
The heart runs back o'er life's bewildered maze,
And pangs, long laid to sleep, awake anew,
And name the loved ones lost,—before their day
Swept, whilst life yet was beautiful, away.

Alas, alas! These strains they cannot hear,
The souls to whom my earliest lays I sang;
Gone is that loving band of friends so dear,
The echoes hushed, that once responsive rang;
My numbers fall upon the stranger's ear,
Whose very praise is to my heart a pang,
And all, who in my lays took pride of yore,
Are lost in other lands, or else no more.

And yearnings fill my soul, unwonted long,
To yonder still, sad, spirit-world to go;
Now, like Æolian harp, my faltering song
Rises and falls in fitful cadence low;
A shudder thrills me, as old memories throng,
The strong heart melts, tears fast on tear-drops flow
What still is mine seems far, far off to be,
And what has vanished lives anew for me.

PRELUDE AT THE THEATRE

MANAGER.

POET OF THE THEATRE. MERRYMAN.

MANAGER.

OLD friends and true, my proved allies
In times of trouble and of need,
Say, how you think our enterprise
Will here on German soil succeed.
My aim and chief delight would be
To please the crowd, especially
As "Live and let live" is their creed.
Our booth is up, both wind and water tight,
And all are looking forward to a treat:
Even now they sit, with eyebrows raised, and quite
For marvels primed, to lift them off their feet.
Well know I how to hit the public taste,
Yet ne'er felt so perplexed as now I feel;
'Tis true, they're not accustomed to the best,
But then the rogues have read an awful deal.
How to contrive, then, something fresh and new,
To set them thinking, yet amuse them too?
For, sooth, it glads my heart the crowd to view,
When, setting towards our booth with streamlike rush,
They pour along, wave coursing wave, and through
The narrow doorway elbow, squeeze, and crush:
When in broad day, by three, or even before,
They make a dash at the pay-taker's wicket,
Like starving men, that storm a baker's door
For bread, their ribs imperilling for a ticket.

This miracle on men so various may
The poet only work. Work thou it, friend, to-day!

POET.

Oh, tell me not of yonder motley crew,
Which scares our spirit with its aspect coarse,
Yon surging throng, oh, veil it from my view,
Which in its eddies drags us down perforce!
No, lead me to some heaven-calm nook, where true
Delight hath for the bard alone its source,
Where love and friendship wake, refine, expand
Our heart's blest blessings with celestial hand.

What there has touched the spirit's inward ear,
And on the lips a trembling echo found,
Uncertain now, now full, perchance, and clear,
Is in the wild world's dizzying tumult drowned.
Oft only after throes of year on year
With perfect form our spirit's dream is crowned;
The showy lives its little hour; the true
To after-times bears rapture ever new.

MERRYMAN.

Truce to this prate of after-times! Were I
Of after-times to babble thus, why, who
With fun would these our present times supply?
Yet fun they will have, and with reason, too.
A jovial presence, readiness, address,
Go far, believe me, to command success.
He that can put what he has got to say
Into the compass of a pleasant piece,
And send his points home well, he, come what may,
Will ne'er be soured by popular caprice.
He wants a large wide public for his sphere;
There burns his genius with a tenfold ardour,
For there, he knows, he's sure to catch their ear.

To move them deeper, and to hit them harder.
Coragio, then,—to work! and let them see
The very type of what a piece should be.
Fancy with all her ministering train,—
Thought, Reason, Feeling, Passion, Melancholy, –
Make these to speak, each in her proper strain,
And, last not least, forget not, mark me, Folly!

MANAGER.

But put, be sure, whatever else you may,
Enough of incident into your play,
Plenty to look at,—that's what people like,
'Tis what they come for; dazzle, then, their eyes
With bustle, plot, spectacle,—things that strike
The multitude with open-mouthed surprise.
"Superb! sublime!" they cry, "what breadth! what power!"
And you become the lion of the hour.
Only by mass can you subdue the masses,
A sop for every taste, for every bent;
He that brings much brings something for all classes,
And everybody quits the house content.
If you're to give a piece, in pieces give it!
With a ragout like that succeed you must.
To serve it up so is quite easy—just
As easy anyhow as to invent it.
In one organic whole though you present it,
Harmonious and compact, it little matters;
The public's sure to tear it into tatters,
Blur every tint, and every joint unrivet.

POET.

You do not feel, how all unworthy is
Such vulgar handicraftsman's work as this;
How little consonant with every aim,
That spurs the genuine artist on to fame.

Mere paltry patchwork, gaudy, and unreal,
Run up at random by your bungling fool,
Alas! too well, I see, is your ideal,
Approved by choice and justified by rule.

MANAGER.

Rail on! I care not how you thrust.
Whoe'er would work to purpose must
Choose tools that best his purpose fit.
Think, what soft wood you have to split,
And only look for whom you write.
One comes to seek a brief respite
From *ennui*, if he can, and vapours;
Another stupid from a heavy meal,
And, what is worse than all a deal,
Scores fresh from reading magazines and papers.
They rush to us as to a masquerade,
Quite in the cue for dissipation,
And the mere prospect of a new sensation
Wings all their footsteps, man and maid.
The ladies, in their best arrayed,
Think only how to catch the eye,
And with our own performers vie,
Themselves performers, though unpaid.
Your poet-dreams, your soarings high,
Oh, they were there appropriate, very!
Zounds, do you fancy, these will ever draw
A bumper house, or make it merry?
Regard your patrons closely. Why,
They're one half cold, the other raw.
One's longing for the play to end,
That he may have his game of cards in quiet,
Another's eager to be off, to spend
The night upon a wench's lap in riot.
Why then, ye simpletons, for such a pack
Put the sweet, gracious Muses on the rack?

I tell you, only give enough to hear and see,
No matter what the quality may be!
And you can never miss your mark. Contrive
To keep folk's curiosity alive,
Their senses stun, and mystify their brains;
To satisfy them's more than man can do.
How! What's amiss? Are these poetic pains,
Or stomach-qualms, that have got hold of you?

POET.

Begone, and seek elsewhere some other man,
Lackey in soul, to work on such a plan!
What! shall the poet fool, at thy behest,
The right away, 'twere sin if he forsook,
His human-heartedness, the noblest, best,
Endowment, which from Nature's hands he took?
By what stirs he all hearts as by a spell,
And makes them quail, or at his will be strong?
By what does he each element compel,
To lend some fresh enchantment to his song?
Oh, is it not the harmony, that rings
From his full soul with unconstrainèd art,
And, circling round creation's orbit, brings
The whole world back in music to his heart?
When Nature winds her endless threads along
The spindles, heedless how they cross or tangle,
When all created things, a jarring throng,
In chaos intermingling, clash and jangle,
Who parts them, till each living fibre takes
Its ordered place, and moves in rhythmic time,
Who in the general consecration makes
Each unit swell the symphony sublime?
Who links our passions with the tempest's glooms
Our solemn thoughts with twilight's roseate red,
Who scatters all the springtide's loveliest blooms
Along the path the loved one deigns to tread?

Who of some chance green leaves doth chaplets twine
Of glory for desert in every field,
Assures Olympus, gives the stamp divine?
Man's power immortal in the bard revealed!

MERRYMAN.

To work, then, with these powers so rare,
And ply your task of bard and singer,
As people push a love affair!
They meet by accident, are smitten, linger,
And get themselves somehow into a tangle;
All's love and bliss,—then comes a tiff, a wrangle,
In heaven one hour, the next, despair, distraction,
And, presto, lo! a whole romance in action!
After this fashion let us, too,
Construct our piece. But see, that you
Go straight at all the stir and strife,
That agitate our human life;
All have it, but not many know it.
Get hold of it, where'er you will,
In all its motley mixture show it,
And it is interesting still.
A medley give of personages, wheeling
'Neath impulses half seen, half hid from view,
With much that's false to nature and to feeling
Mix here and there a spice of something true:
So you a famous beverage compound,
To rouse and edify the house all round.
Then to your play throngs youth's prime flower, intent
To see its future there made clear and plain,
Then tender souls from it seek nourishment,
To feed withal their melancholy vein.
Call up now this, now that, love, hate, mirth, rage, despair.
And all will then behold what in their heart they bear.
They still are of that happy age, when they
Are equally prepared to laugh or weep;

They still can find a pleasure in display,
Still reverence bold imagination's sweep.
He that is past his growth, hard, formal, set,
There's no contenting him, howe'er you sing:
The young, with all their growth before them yet,
Will thank you heartily for all you bring.

POET.

Then give, give me too back the days,
When I myself, like them, was growing,
When forth gushed thronging lays on lays,
As from a fountain ever flowing;
When to my wondering eyes the world,
As in a veil of mist, was set,
And every bud gave promise yet
Of marvels in its leaves upcurled;
When swiftly sped the happy hours,
As, roaming like a summer gale,
I plucked at will the thousand flowers,
That blossomed thick through every vale.
Nought had I then, yet had in sooth
Such wealth as nothing could enhance,
The thirst unquenchable for truth,
The blest delusions of romance.
Give each bold impulse back to me,
The deep wild joy, that thrilled like pain,
The might of hate, love's ecstasy,
Give me my youth again!

MERRYMAN.

Of youth, good friend, you would have need, no doubt,
If foes on battle-plain were round you pressing,
If some fond wench had flung her arms about
Your neck, and plied you hard with her caressing;
If from a far-off goal, nigh out of sight,
The wreath, for him that wins the prize, were blinking,

If, after dancing madly half the night,
You settled down to spend the rest in drinking,
But on the lyre's familiar strings to lay
Your grasp with masterful, yet sweet control,
And, there meandering gracefully, to stray
On to your shining self-appointed goal,—
This the vocation is of you old fellows,
Nor do we therefore prize you less, my friend.
Age does not make men childish, as folks tell us.
It only finds them children to the end.

MANAGER.

Enough of talk! At all events,
I fain would see you up and doing:
While you are turning compliments,
Something to purpose might be brewing.
Why speak of waiting for the mood?
Wait, and 'twill never come at all!
You set up for a poet,—good!
Then hold your poetry at call.
You know the article we want,—
A drink strong, sharp, and stimulant,—
So get to work, and brew away!
Full well we wot, and to our sorrow,
That what's not set about to-day
Is never finished on the morrow.
No man of sense will waste in such
Delays one day, one single hour;
No, he will by the forelock clutch
Whatever lies within his power;
Stick fast to it, and neither shirk,
Nor from his enterprise be thrust,
But, having once begun to work,
Go working on, because he must.
On German stages one expects,
You know, vagaries wild and daring.

So of mechanical effects,
And gorgeous scenery be not sparing!
Turn on heaven's greater light and less,
Be lavish of the stars withal,
Fire, forest, sea, crag, waterfall,
Birds, beasts into your service press.
So in this narrow booth sweep round
Creation to its farthest bound,
And, with such speed as best will tell,
From heaven post through the world to hell!

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN

THE LORD. THE HEAVENLY HOSTS. *Afterwards* MEPHISTOPHELES.

THE THREE ARCHANGELS *come forward.*

RAPHAEL.

THE sun in chorus, as of old,
With brother spheres is sounding still,
And, on its thunderous orbit rolled,
Doth its appointed course fulfil.
The angels, as they gaze, grow strong,
Though fathom it they never may;
These works sublime, untouched by wrong,
Are bright as on the primal day.

GABRIEL.

And swift, beyond conceiving swift,
The earth is wheeling onward; mark!
From dark to light its surface shift,
From brightest light to deepest dark!
In foam the sea's broad billows leap,
And lash the rocks with giant force,
And rock and billow onward sweep
With sun and stars in endless course.

MICHAEL.

And battling storms are raging high
From shore to sea, from sea to shore,
And radiate currents, as they fly,
That quicken earth through every pore.

There blasting lightnings scatter fear,
And thunders peal; but here they lay
Their terrors down, and, Lord, revere
The gentle going of Thy day.

THE THREE.

The angels, as they gaze, grow strong,
Yet fathom Thee they never may;
And all Thy works, untouched by wrong,
Are bright as on the primal day.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Since Thou, O Lord, amongst us com'st once more,
To ask how things are getting forward here,
And Thou hast commonly been kind before,
I at thy levee with the rest appear.
I can't talk grandly, not though these fine folks
Should all upon my homeliness cry scorn;
My pathos surely would Thy mirth provoke,
If Thou hadst not all merriment forsworn.
Of sun and worlds I nothing have to say;
I only see, how mortals fume and fret.
The world's small god retains his old stamp yet;
And is as queer as on the primal day.
He had been better off, hadst Thou not some
Faint gleam of heavenly light into him put;
Reason he calls it, and doth yet become
More brutish through it than the veriest brute.
He seems to me, if I my thought may state,
One of those grasshoppers, with legs ell-long,
That flies and leaps, and flies again, and straight
Down in the grass is piping its old song!
If to the grass he kept, his grief were less,
But he will thrust his nose in every dirty mess!

THE LORD.

Hast thou, then, nothing else to say but this?
Comest thou ever, only to complain?
Art thou with nothing upon earth content?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No, Lord! I find things there, as ever, much amiss.
Men and their troubles cause me genuine pain;
Not even I would the poor souls torment.

THE LORD.

Dost thou know Faust?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! Doctor Faust?

THE LORD.

My servant.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thy servant? Well, his service may be fervent,
But it is surely of the strangest kind.
Not upon earth, the fool! is he
Content his food or drink to find;
Craving for what can never be,
Yet scarce to his own madness blind,
He would be soaring far and free,
In hopes to clutch Immensity.
From heaven he asks its fairest star,
From earth its every chief delight,
Yet all that's near, and all that's far,
Although they lay within his might,
Would never yield the looked-for zest,
Nor still the torturing tumult of his breast.

THE LORD.

Though now he serve me stumblingly, the hour
Is nigh, when I shall lead him into light.
When the tree buds, the gardener knows, that flower
And fruit will make the coming seasons bright.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What will you wager? If you only let
Me lead him without hindrance my own way,
I'll answer for it, you shall lose him yet!

THE LORD.

So long as on the earth he lives, you may
Your snares for him and fascinations set:
Man, while his struggle lasts, is prone to stray.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

For this you have my thanks; for I protest,
That with dead men I never cared to deal;
Plump, rosy cheeks are what I like the best.
When corpses call, I'm out; for, sooth, I feel,
Like cats with mice, 'tis life that gives the zest.

THE LORD.

Enough, 'tis granted! From the source, where he
His being had, this spirit turn aside,
And lead him, if thou'rt able, down with thee,
Along thy way, that pleasant is and wide;
And stand abashed, when thou art forced to own,
A good man, in the darkness and dismay
Of powers that fail, and purposes o'erthrown,
May still be conscious of the proper way.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Good! But at rest the point will soon be set;
I'm not at all alarmed about my bet.

If I should win and crow too loudly, you
Will not amiss my little triumph take?
Dust shall he eat, ay, and with relish, too,
Like that old cousin of mine, the famous snake.

THE LORD.

As to this, also, thou art wholly free;
Hate have I never felt for such as thee!
Among the spirits that deny,
The scoffer doth offend me least of all.
Who may on man's activity rely?
Into indulgent ease 'tis apt to fall.
Whatever his beginnings, soon he grows
To yearn for unconditional repose;
And therefore am I always glad to yoke
In fellowship with him a comrade, who
Is ever ready to incite, provoke,
And must, as devil, be stirring, such as you.

But, ye true sons of heaven, rejoice to share
The wealth exuberant of all that's fair,
Which lives, and has its being everywhere!
And the creative essence which surrounds,
And lives all-wheres, and worketh evermore,
Encompass you within love's gracious bounds;
And all the world of things, which flit before
The gaze in seeming fitful and obscure,
Do ye in lasting thoughts embody and secure!

[*Heaven closes; the* ARCHANGELS *disperse.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*alone*).

The Old One now and then I like to see,
And not to break with him take special heed.
'Tis very good of such a great grandee
To be so civil to me,—'tis indeed.

FAUST: A TRAGEDY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Night.

A lofty, vaulted, narrow, Gothic chamber.—
Faust *seated at his desk.*

Faust.

All that philosophy can teach,
The craft of lawyer and of leech,
I've mastered, ah! and sweated through
Theology's dreary deserts, too,
Yet here, poor fool! for all my lore,
I stand no wiser than before.
They call me magister, save the mark!
Doctor, withal! and these ten years I
Have been leading my pupils a dance in the dark,
Up hill, down dale, through wet and through dry—
And yet, that nothing can ever be
By mortals known, too well I see!
This is burning the heart clean out of me.
More brains have I than all the tribe
Of doctor, magister, parson, and scribe.
From doubts and scruples my soul is free;
Nor hell nor devil has terrors for me:
But just for this I am dispossessed
Of all that gives pleasure to life and zest.
I can't even juggle myself to own,
There is any one thing to be truly known,
Or aught to be taught in science or arts,
To better mankind and to turn their hearts.

Besides, I have neither land nor pence,
Nor worldly honour nor influence.
A dog in my case would scorn to live!
So myself to magic I've vowed to give,
And see, if through spirit's might and tongue
The heart from some mysteries cannot be wrung;
If I cannot escape from the bitter woe
Of babbling of things that I do not know,
And get to the root of those secret powers,
Which hold together this world of ours,
The sources and centres of force explore,
And chaffer and dabble in words no more.

Oh, broad bright moon, if this might be
The last of the nights of agony,
The countless midnights, these weary eyes
Have from this desk here watched thee rise!
Then, sad-eyed friend, thy wistful looks
Shone in upon me o'er paper and books;
But oh! might I wander, in thy dear light,
O'er the trackless slopes of some mountain height.
Round mountain caverns with spirits sail,
Or float o'er the meads in thy hazes pale;
And, freed from the fumes of a fruitless lore,
Bathe in thy dews, and be whole once more!

Ah me! am I penned in this dungeon still?
Accursèd doghole, clammy and chill!
Where heaven's own blessèd light must pass,
Shorn of its rays, through the painted glass,
Narrowed and cumbered by piles of books,
That are gnawed by worms and grimed with dust,
And which, with its smoke-stained paper, looks
Swathed to the roof in a dingy rust;
Stuck round with phials, and chests untold,
With instruments littered, and lumbered with old

Crazy, ancestral, household ware—
This is your world! A world most rare!

And yet can you wonder, why your soul
Is numbed within your breast, and why
A dead, dull, anguish makes your whole
Life's pulses falter, and ebb, and die?
How should it be but so? Instead
Of the living nature, whereinto
God has created man, things dead
And drear alone encompass you—
Smoke, litter, dust, the skeletons
Of birds and beasts, and dead men's bones!

Up, up! Away to the champaign free!
And this mysterious volume, writ
By Nostradamus' self, is it
Not guide and counsel enough for thee?
Then wilt thou learn, by what control
The stars within their orbits roll,
And if thou wilt let boon Nature be
The guide and monitress to thee,
Thy soul shall expand with tenfold force,
As spirit with spirit holds discourse.
Dull poring, think not, that can here
Expound these holy signs to thee!
Ye spirits, ye are hovering near,
If ye can hear me, answer me!

[*Throws open the book, and discovers the sign of the Macrocosm.*

Ha! as it meets my gaze, what rapture, gushing
Through all my senses, mounts into my brain!
Youth's ecstasy divine, I feel it rushing,
Like quickening fire, through every nerve and vein!
Was it a god who chronicled these signs,
Which all the war within me still,

The aching heart with sweetness fill,
And to mine eyes, in clearest lines,
Unveil all Nature's powers as with a mystic thrill?
Am I a god? All grows so bright.
In these pure outlines I behold
Nature at work before my soul unrolled.
Now can I read the sage's saw aright:
"Not barred to man the world of spirits is;
Thy sense is shut, thy heart is dead!
Up, student, lave,—nor dread the bliss,—
Thy earthly breast in the morning-red!"
[*Gazes intently at the sign.*
Into one whole how all things blend,
One in the other working, living!
What powers celestial, lo! ascend, descend,
Each unto each the golden pitchers giving!
And, wafting blessings from their wings,
From heaven through farthest earth career,
While through the universal sphere
One universal concord rings!

Oh, what a show! yet but a show! Ah me!
Where, boundless nature, shall I clutch at thee?
Ye breasts, where are ye? Ye perennial springs
Of life, whereon hang heaven and earth,
Whereto the blighted bosom clings,
Ye gush, ye slake all thirst, yet I pine on in dearth!
[*Turns the leaves of the book angrily, and sees the sign of the Earth Spirit.*
How differently I feel before this sign!
Earth Spirit, thou to me art nearer;
My faculties grow loftier, clearer,
Even now I glow as with new wine.
Courage I feel, into the world to roam,
To bid earth's joys and sorrows hail,
'Mid storm and struggle to make my home,

And in the crash of shipwreck not to quail.
Clouds gather o'er my head;
The moon conceals her light,
The lamp's gone out. The air
Grows thick and close! Red flashes play
Around me. From the vaulted roof
A shuddering horror creeps
And on me lays its gripe!
Spirit by me invoked, I feel
Thou'rt hovering near,—thou art, thou art!
Unveil thyself!
Ha! What a tugging at my heart!
Stirred through their depths, my senses reel
With passions new and strange! I feel,
My heart is thine, thine wholly! Hear!
Thou must! ay, though it cost my life, thou must appear!

[*Seizes the book, and utters the sign of the Spirit mysteriously. A red light flashes, in which the Spirit appears.*

SPIRIT.

Who calls on me?

FAUST (*turning away*).

Dread vision gaunt!

SPIRIT.

By potent art thou'st dragged me here;
Thou'st long been sucking at my sphere,
And now——

FAUST.

I loathe thee. Hence, avaunt!

SPIRIT.

To view me were thy prayer and choice,
To see my face, to hear my voice.

Well! by thy potent prayer won o'er,
I come. And thou, that wouldst be more
Than mortal, having thy behest,
Art with a craven fear possessed!
Where is thy pride of soul? Where now the breast,
Which in itself a universe created,
Sustained and fostered,—which dilated
With giant throes of rapture, in the hope
As peer with spirits such as me to cope?
Where art thou, Faust, whose summons rang so wide,
Who stormed my haunts, and would not be denied?
Is this thing thou? This, my mere breath doth make
Through every nerve and fibre quake?
A crawling, cowering, timorous worm?

FAUST.

Thou film of flame, art thou a thing to fear?
I am, I am that Faust! I am thy peer!

SPIRIT.

In the currents of Life, in Action's storm,
I wander and I wave,
Everywhere I be!
Birth and the grave,
An infinite sea,
A web ever growing,
A life ever glowing,
Thus at Time's whizzing loom I spin,
And weave the living vesture, that God is mantled in!

FAUST.

Thou busy Spirit, who dost sweep
From sphere to sphere, from deep to deep,
Ranging the world from end to end,
How near akin I feel to thee!

SPIRIT.

Thou'rt like the Spirit, thou dost comprehend,
But not like me! [*Vanishes.*

FAUST.

But not like thee!
Whom, then? What! I,
The image of the Deity!
Yet not to be compared to thee? [*A knock.*

O death! My Famulus! At time like this
To drag me from the top of bliss!
That such a soulless driveller should
Disturb this vision's full beatitude!

Enter WAGNER, *in his dressing-gown and night-cap, with a lamp in his hand.* FAUST *turns away impatiently.*

WAGNER.

I heard you, did I not, declaim?
From one, no doubt, of the old Greek plays?
So in the art to take a hint I came;
For it is much in favour nowadays.
Many a time I've heard it said, at least,
An actor might give lessons to a priest.

FAUST.

Yes, if the priest an actor be,
As now and then will happen, certainly.

WAGNER.

Ah! when one's in his study pent, like me,
And sees the world but on a rare occasion,
And then far off, on some chance holiday,

And through a telescope, as one may say,
How can one ever hope to sway,
Or govern it by eloquent persuasion?

FAUST.

That is a power, which is not to be taught.
It must be felt, must gush forth from within.
And, rising to the lips in words unsought,
The hearts of all to deep emotion win.
Sit on for ever! Till you ache,
Your patchwork and mosaics make;
With scraps at others' banquets found
A ragout of your own compound,
And, blowing at your ash-heap, fan
What miserable flame you can!
Children and apes may praise your art—
A noble triumph, you must own—
But you will never make heart throb with heart,
Unless your own heart first has struck the tone.

WAGNER.

Delivery makes the orator's success.
In that I'm far behind, I must confess.

FAUST.

Scorn such success! Play thou an honest game!
Be no mere empty tinkling fool!
True sense and reason reach their aim,
With little help from art or rule.
Be earnest! Then what need, to seek
The words, that best your meaning speak?
Oh, your orations, garnished, trimmed, refined,
Tickling men's fancies where they're chiefly weak,
Are unrefreshing as the drizzling wind,
That through the autumn's sere leaves whistles bleak.

WAGNER.

Ah me! art is so long, and life so brief!
Oft in my labours critical, a load
Seems weighing on my brain and heart, like lead.
How hard it is, almost beyond belief,
To get at knowledge in its fountain-head!
And ere a man is half way on the road,
He's very sure, poor devil, to be dead.

FAUST.

Is parchment, then, the sacred fount, can give
The stream, that shall allay thy thirst for ever?
Man never quaffed a draught restorative,
That from his own soul welled not—never, never!

WAGNER.

Excuse me, surely 'tis a joy sublime,
To realise the spirit of a time,
To see how sages long ago have thought,
And the high pass to which things nowadays are brought.

FAUST.

High pass! Oh yes! As the welkin high!
My friend, to us they are, these times gone by,
A book with seven seals, and what you call
The spirit of the times, I've long suspected,
Is but the spirit of the men—that's all—
In which the times they prate of are reflected.
And that's a sight, God wot, so poor, so mean,
We run away from it, as soon as seen;
Mere scraps of odds and ends, old crazy lumber,
In dust-bins only fit to rot and slumber;
At best a play on stilts, all strut and glare,
Gewgaws and glitter, fustian and pretence,

With maxims strewn of sage pragmatic air,
That, mouthed by puppets, pass with fools for sense.

WAGNER.

Ay, but the world! The heart and soul of man,
Something of these may, sure, be learned by all.

FAUST.

As men call learning, yes, no doubt, it can!
But who the child by its right name will call?
The few, who something of that knowledge learned,
And were not wise enough a guard to keep
On their full hearts, but to the people showed
The reaches of their soaring thoughts, the deep
Emotions that within them glowed,
Men at all times have crucified and burned.*
I prithee, friend, 'tis far into the night,
And for the present we must say adieu!

WAGNER.

I'd gladly watch till dawn, for the delight
Of such most edifying talk with you.
To-morrow, being Easter-day,
Good sir, if I so far might task you,
Some things there are, which I should like to say,
Some further questions, I should like to ask you;
My zeal has in my studies not been small;
Much, it is true, I know, but I would fain know all.
[*Exit.*

FAUST.

Strange, that all hope has not long since been blighted
In one content on such mere chaff to feed,

* Whenever a great soul gives utterance to its thoughts, there also is Golgotha.—HEINE.

Who digs for treasure with a miser's greed,
And, if he finds a muck-worm, is delighted!

Dare such a thing as this to babble now,
When all around with spirit-life is teeming?
Yet ah, I thank thee, though the sorriest thou
Of all that tread the earth in mortal seeming.
Thou rescuedst me from the despair, that fast
Was wildering my brain with mad surmise.
Ah, yonder vision was so giant-vast,
I shrank before it to a pigmy's size.

I, God's own image, I, who deemed I stood
With truth eternal full within my gaze,
And, of this earthly husk divested, viewed
In deep contentment heaven's effulgent blaze;
I, more than cherub, whose free powers, methought,
Did all the veins of nature permeate,
I, who—so potently my fancy wrought—
Conceived that, like a god, I could create,
And in creating taste a bliss supreme,
How must I expiate my frenzied dream?
One word, that smote like thunder on my brain,
Swept me away to nothingness again.

I dared not deem myself for thee a peer;
Though to evoke thee I the power possessed,
Yet was I impotent to keep thee here.
Oh, in the rapture of that moment blest
I felt myself so little, yet so great!
But thou didst thrust me back, with cruel scorn,
Upon the sad uncertainties forlorn
Of man's mere mortal state.
Who is to teach me? What shall I
Recoil from? What go widely by?
Yon impulse, passionate, profound,

Shall I obey it, or forswear?
Alas! our way of life is cramped and bound
By what we do, no less than what we're doomed to bear!

Around our spirit's dreams, our noblest, best,
Some base alloy for ever clings and grows;
Once of the good things of this world possessed,
We call a better wealth but lying shows.
The glorious feelings, those that most we prized,
That made indeed our very life of life,
In the world's turmoil and ignoble strife
Are seared and paralysed.

If fancy, for a season flushed with hope,
Through boundless ether soars with wing unchecked,
A little space for her is ample scope.
When in Time's quicksands joy on joy lies wrecked.
Anon creeps care into our nether heart,
And there of secret sorrows breeds great store;
Uneasily she sits, and mopes apart,
Marring our joy and peace; and evermore
Fresh masks she dons, to work us bitter dole.
Turn where we will, she haunts our life,
As house and land, as child and wife,
As fire and flood, as knife and poisoned bowl.

I am not like the gods, too well I feel!
No! Like the worm, that writhes in dust, am I,
Which, as it feeds on dust, the passer-by
Stamps into nothingness beneath his heel.

For what but dust, mere dust, is all,
Which, piled in endless shelf and press,
From floor to roof, contracts this lofty wall?
The trash, all frippery and emptiness,
Which here, in this moth-swarming hole,

Cramps, cabins, and confines my soul?
How shall I e'er discover here
The light and lore, for which I yearn?
Is all my poring, year by year,
On books by thousands, but to learn,
That mortals have been wretched everywhere,
And only one been happy here and there?
What, hollow skull, what means that grin of thine?
But that thy brain was once, like mine, distraught,
Did after truth with rapturous passion pine,
And, while the radiance of the day it sought,
Grew at each step less certain of its way,
And in the twilight went disastrously astray?

Ye instruments, at me ye surely mock,
With cog and wheel and coil and cylinder!
I at the door of knowledge stood, ye were
The key, which should that door for me unlock;
Your wards, I ween, have many a cunning maze,
But yet the bolts ye cannot, cannot raise.
Inscrutable in noonday's blaze,
Nature lets no one tear the veil away,
And what herself she does not choose
Unasked before your soul to lay,
You shall not wrest from her by levers or by screws.

Old lumber, that hast ne'er been used by me,
The reason, and the only, thou art here,
Is that my father worked of yore with thee!
And thou, old roll, hast rotted here and mouldered,
Smeared with the fumes of smoke year after year,
Since first upon this desk the dull lamp smouldered.
Oh, better far, had I with hand profuse
Squandered the little I can call my own,
Than with that little here to sweat and groan!
Would you possess, enjoy and turn to use

What from your sires you have inherited.
What a man owns, but knows not to employ.
A burden is, that weighs on him like lead;
Nought can avail him, nought can he enjoy,
Save what is by the passing moment bred.

Why is my gaze on yonder corner glued?
Yon flask, is it a magnet to my sight?
Why, why is all at once as lovely, bright,
As sudden moonshine in a midnight wood?

All hail, thou priceless phial, which I here
Take from thy shelf with reverential hand!
In thee man's skill and wisdom I revere.
Thou quintessence of all the juices bland,
That drowse the brain with slumber,—abstract thou
Of all most subtle deadly agencies,
Bestow thy grace upon thy master now!
I see thee, and my anguish finds a balm,
I touch thee, and the turmoil turns to calm;
My soul's flood-tide is ebbing by degrees.
A viewless finger beckons me to fleet
To shoreless seas, where never tempest roars,
The glassy flood is shining at my feet,
Another day invites to other shores.

A car of fire, by airy pinions driven,
Flits o'er me: and I stand prepared to flee,
By tracks untrodden, through the wastes of heaven,
Up to new spheres of pure activity.
This life sublime, this godlike rapturous thrill,
Can these by thee, a worm but now, be won?
Yes, so thou turn with a resolvèd will
Thy back on earth, and on its kindly sun!
The gates, most men would slink like cravens by,
Dare thou to burst asunder! Lo, the hour

Is here at hand by deeds to testify,
Man's worth can front the gods in all their power;
To gaze unblenching on that murky pit,
Where fancy weaves herself an endless doom,
To storm that pass, whose narrow gorge is lit
By hell-fires flickering through the ghastly gloom;
Serene, although the risk before thee lay,
Into blank nothingness to melt away!

Then come thou down, pure goblet crystalline,
Out from that time-stained covering of thine,
Where I unmarked for years have let thee rest.
Thou sparkled'st, when my grandsire's feasts were crowned,
Lit'st up the smiles of many a sad-browed guest,
As each man to his neighbour passed thee round.
Thy figures, marvels of the artist's craft,
The drinker's task, to tell their tale in rhyme,
And drain thy huge circumference at a draught,
Bring many a night back of my youthful prime.
I shall not pass thee now to comrade boon,
Nor torture my invention, to explain
The quaint devices of thy graver's brain.
Here is a juice intoxicates full soon;
Its current brown brims up thy ample bowl.
Now do I pledge this draught, my last best care,
In festive greeting, and with all my soul,
To the day-dawn, shall hail me otherwhere!

[*Raises the goblet to his lips. Pealing of bells, and choral song.*

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ is ascended!
Hail the glad token,
True was it spoken,
Sin's fetters are broken,
Man's bondage is ended!

FAUST.

What deepening hum is this, what silver chime,
Drags from my lips perforce the cup away?
Ye booming bells, do you proclaim the time
Once more begun of Easter's festal day?
And you, ye pealing choirs, do you the songs
Of consolation and glad tidings chant,
Hymned round the sepulchre by angel throngs,
Pledge of a new and nobler covenant?

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

With myrrh and with aloes
We balmed and we bathed Him,
Loyally, lovingly,
Tenderly swathed Him;
With cerecloth and band
For the grave we arrayed Him;
But oh, He is gone
From the place where we laid Him!

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ is ascended!
The love that possessed Him,
The pangs that oppressed Him,
To prove and to test Him,
In triumph have ended!

FAUST.

Ye heavenly strains, potent yet soothing, why
Seek ye out me, a crawler in the dust?
Ring out for men more pliant-souled than I!
The message though I hear, I lack the faith robust.
Faith's darling child is miracle. I must,
I dare not strive to mount to yonder spheres,
Whence peal these tidings of great joy to men;

Yet does the strain, familiar to mine ears
From childhood, call me back even now to life again.
Ah, then I felt the kiss of heavenly love
On me in Sabbath's holy calm descending,
The bells rang mystic meanings from above,
A prayer was ecstasy, that seemed unending;
A longing sweet, that would not be controlled,
Drove me through field and wood; and from my eyes
Whilst tears, whose source I could not fathom, rolled,
I felt a great glad world for me arise.
This anthem heralded youth's merriest time,
The gambols of blithe Spring: now memories sweet,
Fraught with the feelings of my childhood's prime,
From the last step decisive stay my feet.
Oh peal, sweet heavenly anthems, peal as then!
Tears flood mine eyes, earth has her child again.

CHORUS OF DISCIPLES.

He that was buried
On high has ascended;
There lives in glory,
Sublimely attended.
In heaven whilst He reigneth,
For us Who was slain here,
On earth we, His chosen,
To suffer remain here,—
To suffer and languish
Midst pain and annoy;
Lord, in our anguish,
We envy Thy joy.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

From the lap of corruption,
Lo! Christ has ascended!
Rejoice, for the fetters,
That bound you, are rended!

Praise Him unceasingly,
Love one another,
Break bread together, like
Sister and brother!
Preach the glad tidings
To all who will hear you,
So will the Master be
Evermore near you!

SCENE II.—Before the Town Gate.

Promenaders of all kinds pass out.

A Party of Mechanics.

But why are you turning up the hill?

Another Party.

We for the Jägerhaus are bound.

First Party.

We think of sauntering towards the mill.

A Mechanic.

Best by the Wasserhof go round.

Second Mechanic.

The road there is none of the prettiest.

The Others.

And where are you for?

Third Mechanic.

I go with the rest.

FOURTH MECHANIC.

Come up to the Burgdorf! That's the place,
Where one is sure to find the best of cheer,
The prettiest wenches, and the strongest beer,
And a good jolly row in any case.

FIFTH MECHANIC.

You pestilent scapegrace,
A third time do you want to be well whacked?
I don't half fancy going there; in fact,
I have a perfect horror of the place.

SERVANT GIRL.

I will go back to town, I will, that's flat!

SECOND SERVANT GIRL.

We're sure to find him at the poplars yonder.

FIRST SERVANT GIRL.

And much the better I shall be for that!
By whose side will he walk, I wonder?
Why, yours! And dance with you, and you alone.
So, while you have your frolic, I may moan.

SECOND SERVANT GIRL.

He's sure to have a friend! Ah, come now, do!
He said that Curlylocks was coming, too.

STUDENT.

Zounds, how these strapping girls step out!
Come, brother, come, let's join them for a bout.
A beer that stuns, a pipe that bites,
And a wench in her braws, are my delights.

CITIZEN'S DAUGHTER.

These fine young fellows, look where they go!
'Tis a downright shame, when they might know
The best of company, if they please,
To be running after such drabs as these!

SECOND STUDENT (*to the first*).

Not quite so fast! Behind us, yonder, see,
A brace of wenches rigged out smart and neat!
One lives almost next door to me,
And on the girl I'm very sweet.
For all their looking so demure,
They'll take us with them presently, I'm sure.

FIRST STUDENT.

No, no! all prudes are bores. Quick, come away,
Or we shall let the game slip! 'Tis confessed,
The hand, that twirls the mop on Saturday,
Fondles on Sunday with peculiar zest.

CITIZEN.

What, our new burgomaster? Nay,
He is a man I cannot bear.
He grows more overbearing every day,
Since he was called into the chair.
And what, pray, does he for the town?
Are things not daily growing worse?
Are we not more and more kept down,
And pulled at more and more in purse?

BEGGAR (*sings*).

Kind sirs, and ladies fair and sweet,
With rosy cheeks and handsome dresses,
Look down upon me, I entreat,
Observe, and lighten my distresses.

In pity listen to my voice!
Free hands make merry hearts and gay;
So make this day, when all rejoice,
To me a very harvest-day.

SECOND CITIZEN.

There's nothing more my heart on Sundays cheers,
Or holidays, than a gossip about war
And warlike rumours, when the peoples far
Away in Turkey all are by the ears.
We by the window stand, toss off our glass,
And down the river watch the painted vessels gliding;
Then home at evening merrily we pass,
And bless the comforts of a peace abiding.

THIRD CITIZEN.

Ay, neighbour, nor care I what lengths they go.
Zounds, they may cleave each other's pates, they may,
And turn the whole world topsy-turvy, so
They leave things here at home to jog on the old way.

OLD WOMAN (*to the Citizen's daughters*).

Heyday! How smart! The pretty dears! Who'd not
Be fairly smitten, now, that met you?
You needn't be so haughty, though, God wot!
What you desire I know the way to get you.

CITIZEN'S DAUGHTER.

Come, Agatha! I'd rather not be seen, to greet
A witch like this upon the public street;
But on Saint Andrew's Eve she let me see
In flesh and blood my lover that's to be.

THE OTHER.

Mine, too, she showed me in the glass,
A soldier, one of a dare-devil set;

Here, there, all wheres I seek him, but, alas!
I have not come across him yet.

SOLDIERS (*sing*).

Towns, with loud defiance sent
Down from tower and battlement;
Maidens, rosy as the morn,
Flashing round them looks of scorn,
These alike for us have charms,
Sound alike the cry, "To arms!"
When such glorious prizes call us,
Death nor danger can appal us.

When we hear the trumpets blow,
On to death or bliss we go!
What is like the soldier's trade?
What can match such escalade?
Forted towns, and maidens tender
Must alike to us surrender.
When such glorious prizes call us,
Death nor danger can appal us.

CHORUS.

Maids or widows may be sighing,
On we march with colours flying!

FAUST.

Freed from the ice are river and rill
By the quickening glance of the gracious Spring;
Green with promise are valley and hill.
Old winter, palsied and shivering,
Back has crept to his mountains bleak,
And sends from them, as he flies appalled,
Showers of impotent hail, to streak
The fields that are green as emerald.
But the sun no shimmer of whiteness brooks;

The earth is through all her pores alive,
Budding and bursting, and all things strive
To enliven with colours their winterly looks;
And the landscape, though bare of flowers, makes cheer
With people dressed out in their holiday gear.
Turn round, and from this height look down
Over the vineyards upon the town!
A motley medley is making its way
Out from the murky wide-mouthed gate.
Blithely they bask in the sun to-day.
The Saviour's Rising they celebrate,
For they have risen themselves, I ween;
From the close, damp, rooms of their hovels mean,
From the bonds of business, and labour, and care,
From the gables and roofs, that oppress them there,
From the stifling closeness of street and lane,
From the churches' gloom-inspiring night,
They all have emerged into the light.
But, see, how they are spreading amain
Across the gardens and fields, and how
The river, as far as the eye can note,
Is all alive with shallop and boat!
And look! the last departing now,
Laden so deeply it scarce can float.
Far up on the hills as the pathways run,
Gay dresses are glistering in the sun.
Hark now the din of the village! Here
Is the people's true heaven. With hearty glee,
Little and great, how they shout and cheer!
Here I am man, here such dare be.

WAGNER.

To walk about with you, sir doctor, so
Is honour, yea, and profit. Still, were I alone,
I would not here be loitering thus, I own,
Seeing of all that's coarse I am the foe.

Your fiddling, shouting, skittle-playing, all
Are noises which I loathe and quite resent.
These creatures rave, as if the devil drove, and call
Their riot song, forsooth, and merriment.

PEASANTS UNDER THE LINDEN TREE.

Dance and song.

The shepherd for the dance was dressed;
All tricked out in his Sunday best,
With ribbons gay and sightly.
Thronged round the linden lass and lad,
And all were dancing there like mad,
Huzza! huzza!
Hip! hip! huzza!
The fiddle-bow went sprightly.

Into the thick of them he paced,
And clipped a damsel round the waist,
His arms about her bending;
The buxom wench turned round and said,
"You stupid oaf, where were you bred?"
Huzza! huzza!
Hip! hip! huzza!
"Your manners, sir, want mending!"

But faster grew the fun, and right
And left they wheeled; it was a sight
To see the kirtles flying!
And they grew red, and they grew warm,
And then they rested, arm in arm,
Huzza! huzza!
Hip! hip! huzza!
Such panting, and such sighing!

"Hold off your saucy hands! You men
Are all deceit and falsehood, when
You find a girl undoubting."

But he coaxed her, and she stepped aside,
While from the linden echoed wide,
Huzza! huzza!
Hip! hip! huzza!
The fiddling and the shouting.

OLD PEASANT.

Sir Doctor, this is kind of you,
To think no scorn of us to-day;
And you such a grand scholar too,
To mix with simple folks this way!
Here, take this jug, 'tis handsome ware,
Nor is the liquor of the worst,
I pledge you in it, with the prayer,
It may not only quench your thirst,
But that each drop within it may
Add to your life another day!

FAUST.

Right gladly I obey your call,
And drink, with thanks, good health to all!
[*The people gather round him in a circle.*

OLD PEASANT.

Indeed this is most kindly done,
To mingle in our mirth to-day.
Ah, sir, you stood our friend in times,
When we were anything but gay.
There's many a hale man standing here,
Your father rescued from the clutch
Of raging fever, when he stayed
The plague that wasted us so much.
Though but a lad, from house to house
You sought the sick and dying too:
They bore out many stark and stiff,
But nothing ever ailed with you.

Your trials many were and sore,
You bore them with a spirit brave,
And the great Saviour of us all
Saved him that lent a hand to save.

ALL.

Health to the trusty friend, and may
He live to help us many a day!

FAUST.

To Him above be homage paid,
Who only counsel can, or aid!

[*Walks on with* WAGNER.

WAGNER.

What must you feel, to think, illustrious man,
This crowd reveres you with a love so deep?
Oh happy, who from his endowments can
So fair a harvest of advantage reap!
The father points you to his son,
The people whisper, crowd, and run,
The fiddle stops, and lad and lass
Break up the dance midway to stare;
They stand in rows for you to pass,
Their caps fly up into the air;
Upon their knees they dropped, almost
As though it were the passing of the Host.

FAUST.

Some few steps farther, up to yonder stone!
Here will we rest, and taste the evening air:
Ofttimes I sat here, wrapt in thought, alone,
And racked myself with fasting and with prayer.
Brimmed full with hope, in faith unwavering,
By tears and sighs and beatings of the breast
From the great Lord of Heaven I sought to wring

Cessation of that devastating pest.
Like mockery now rings yonder crowd's applause.
Oh, could you look into my soul, and read,
How little worthy son or father was
Of such repute as they to us decreed!
My father was a good man, not too bright,
Who, by strange notions of his own deluded,
In all good faith, with patience infinite,
On nature and her sacred circles brooded;
Who shut himself with his adepts away
In a laboratory, black, grim, and mystic,
And fused and fused, by rule and recipe,
Things that by nature are antagonistic.
The Lion Red, bold wooer, bolder mate,
In tepid bath was to the Lily married,
And both were then by open fire-flame straight
From one bride-chamber to another harried.
Thus in due time the Youthful Queen, inside
The glass retort, in motley colours hovered:
This was the medicine; the patients died,
And no one thought of asking, who recovered.
So 'mongst these hills and vales our hell-broths wrought
More havoc, brought more victims to the grave,
By many, than the pestilence had brought.
To thousands I myself the poison gave:
They pined and perished; I live on, to hear
Their reckless murderers' praises far and near.

WAGNER.

But why let this distress you,—why?
Can any honest man do more,
Than conscientiously to ply
His craft as by its masters plied before?
If you, as youth, revere your father, you
Of course accept from him what he can teach;

If you, as man, see farther, wider too,
Your son in turn a higher mark may reach.

FAUST.

O happy he, who still can hope
Out of this sea of error to arise!
We long to use what lies beyond our scope,
Yet cannot use even what within it lies.
But let us not, by saddening thoughts like these,
The blessing of this happy hour o'errun.
See, how they gleam, the green-girt cottages,
Fired by the radiance of the evening sun!
It slopes, it sets. Day wanes. On with a bound
It speeds, and lo! a new world is alive!
O God, for wings to lift me from the ground,
Onward, still onward after it to strive!
Beneath me I should see, as on I pressed,
The hushed world ever bathed in evening's beams,
Each mountain-top on fire, each vale at rest,
The silver brook flow into golden streams.
Nor peak nor mountain-chasm should then defeat
My onward course, so godlike and so free.
Lo, with its bays all winking in the heat,
Bursts on my wonder-smitten eyes the sea!
But now the god appears about to sink!
Fresh impulse stirs me, not to be confined.
I hurry on, his deathless light to drink,
The day before me, and the night behind,
The heavens above me, and the waves below.
A lovely dream! Meanwhile, the sun his face
Has hid. Ah, with the spirit's wings will no
Corporeal wings so readily keep pace!
Yet is the yearning with us all inborn,
Upwards and onwards to be struggling still,
When over us we hear the lark, at morn,
Lost in the sky, her quivering carol trill;

When o'er the mountains' pine-clad summits drear
The eagle wheels afar on outstretched wing,
When over flat and over mere
The crane is homewards labouring.

WAGNER.

I too have often had my whims and moods,
But never was by such an impulse stirred.
A man soon looks his fill at fields and woods;
The wings I ne'er shall envy of a bird.
How differently the spirit's pure delights
Waft us from book to book, from page to page!
They give a beauty to the winter's nights,
A cheerful glow that can its chill assuage.
And some fine manuscript when you unroll,
Ah, then all heaven descends into your soul!

FAUST.

One only aspiration thou hast known,
Oh, never seek to know the other, never!
Two souls, alas! within my bosom throne,
That each from other fiercely longs to sever.
One, with a passionate love that never tires,
Cleaves as with cramps of steel to things of earth,
The other upwards through earth's mists aspires
To kindred regions of a loftier worth.
Oh, in the air if spirits be,
That float 'twixt earth and heaven, and lord it there,
Then from your golden haze descend, and me
Far hence to fields of new existence bear!
Yes, if a magic mantle were but mine,
To stranger lands to waft me at my call,
I'd prize it more than robes of costliest shine,
I would not change it for a monarch's pall.

WAGNER.

The too familiar throng invoke not, who,
In trailing vapours spread upon the wind,
Come trooping from all quarters, where they brew
Unnumbered plagues and perils for mankind.
The sharp-fanged spirits of the North, lo, they
Come rushing down on you with arrowy tongues;
Those of the East, they parch you dry as hay,
And suck a slow nutrition from your lungs.
If from the desert sands the South sends out
Those that heap fire on fire around your brain,
The West brings those, that first refresh, no doubt,
But end with drowning you, and field, and plain.
They watch our every word, on mischief bent,
Obey each wish, yet turn them all awry,
They look as if from heaven expressly sent,
And lisp like very angels when they lie.
But let us go! the earth is wrapt in grey;
The air grows chill, the mists are falling.
'Tis evening makes us prize our homes. But, hey!
Why stare you thus, as at some sight appalling?
What in the dusk there fills you with such trouble?

FAUST.

Seest thou yon black dog coursing through the stubble?

WAGNER.

I saw him long ago, but heeded not the least.

FAUST.

Observe him well! For what tak'st thou the beast?

WAGNER.

Why, for a poodle, trying to hark back,
In doglike wise upon his master's track.

FAUST.

See how he doth in spiral circles make
A circuit round us, wheeling nigh and nigher!
And after him—it can be no mistake—
There follows, as he runs, a trail of fire.

WAGNER.

Nought but a coal-black poodle can I see;
It must some optical illusion be.

FAUST.

To me it seems, that round our feet he draws
Fine magic toils to snare us, fast and faster.

WAGNER.

Round us he runs perplexed and shy, because
He sees two strangers here, and not his master.

FAUST.

The circle narrows. He touches us almost.

WAGNER.

'Tis a mere dog, you see, and not a ghost.
He growls, hangs back, lies down, begins to whine,
Waggles his tail—all practices canine.

FAUST.

Here, go along with us! Come hither, come!

WAGNER.

A merry beast it is, and frolicsome.
Stand still, and he sits up and begs,
Speak to him, and he jumps upon your legs;
Lose anything, he'll find it for you quick,
And leap into the water for your stick.

FAUST.

Thou'rt right! I find not of a spirit here
One single trace: 'tis training all, that's clear.

WAGNER.

The dog, if well brought up, may be
Even for the sage good company:
Your favour, possibly your thanks,
He certainly deserves to earn;
The students, sir, have taught him all these pranks,
Which he has shown much aptitude to learn.

[*They pass in at the gate of the town.*

SCENE III.—FAUST'S STUDY.

FAUST (*entering with the poodle*).

Meadow I've left, and dale and hill,
  In night's deep gloom arrayed, that wakes
Within us, with a solemn thrill,
  The mood which most of heaven partakes:
Each wild desire is lulled to rest,
  That rent the heart, or racked the brow;
The love of man now fires the breast,
  The love of God is kindling now.

Peace, dog, be quiet! Your restlessness wearies!
Why sniff you so at the threshold there?
Down, sir, behind the stove! See, here is
The best of my cushions, to make you a lair.
We did not object to your coursing and leaping,
It served to amuse us up there on the hill,
But if you are to remain in my keeping,
You must learn, like a well-mannered guest, to be still.

Ah! when within our narrow room
The friendly lamp again is lit,
Then from our spirit flies the gloom,
That dulled and overshadowed it.
Reason begins once more to speak,
And hope again to plume her wings;
After life's streams we pant, yea, seek
The very fountain whence it springs.

Cease, dog, to growl! The brutish sound
Jars with the hallowed tones, that all
My soul at this sweet hour enthral!
We think it not strange, when men around
Deride the things they comprehend not,
And all that is fairest and best contemn,
For how should such things their vile natures offend not?
Would the hound be snarling at these, like them?

But ah! I feel, strive as I may, that peace
Will well forth from my bosom never more.
Yet, wherefore should its stream so quickly cease,
And we lie parched and panting as before?
So oft have I been doomed thus low to fall.
Yet for this want we may have compensation;
We learn to prize the supernatural,
And cry with yearning hearts for Revelation,
Which nowhere burns more worthily and clear,
Than all through the New Testament. So here
I turn me to the primal text, elate
With a wild longing, line for line,
The great original divine
Into my own dear German to translate.
[*Opens the volume, and prepares to write.*
"In the Beginning was the Word!" 'Tis writ.
Here on the threshold I must pause, perforce;
And who will help me onwards in my course?

No, by no possibility is't fit,
I should the naked Word so highly rate.
Some other way must I the words translate,
If by the Spirit rightly I be taught.
"In the Beginning was the Sense!" 'Tis writ.
The first line ponder well. Is it
The Sense, which is of each created thing
The primal cause, and regulating spring?
It should stand thus: "In the Beginning was
The Force!" Yet even as I write, I pause.
A something warns me, this will not content me.
Lo! help is from the Spirit sent me!
I see my way; with lightning speed
The meaning flashes on my sight,
And with assured conviction thus I write:
"In the Beginning was the Deed!"

My chamber if you wish to share,
This howling, poodle, straight forbear,
This barking, and this riot!
To brook a comrade so unquiet
Is more than I am able.
Here both of us cannot remain,
And, though it goes against my grain
To be inhospitable,
There is the door, and you are free
To go! But what is this I see?
How can such transformation be?
Is it a real thing, or throws
Some glamour over me its spells?
How long and broad my poodle grows!
It rises, it dilates and swells.
This is no dog: what can it be,
This fiend, I have brought home with me?
Now with his fiery eyes, and rows
On rows of horrid teeth, he shows

Like any hippopotamus!
Ha! Now I know you! Is it thus?
For such half-hell-begotten brood
The seal of Solomon is good.

SPIRITS (*in the passage outside*).

One we know well
Is caught fast within there.
Mind what you're doing,
No one go in there!
An old lynx of hell,
Like a fox in a gin, there
Is quaking and stewing.
Have a care! Have a care!
Unseen, through the air,
Flit ye and hover,
To and fro, round about,
Now under, now over,
And he will get out!

Aid him all, if aid ye may!
He has done us ere to-day
Pleasures manifold and rare!
Help him, then, in his despair!

FAUST.

To grapple with the monster, I
The Spell of the Four at first will try.

Salamander, he shall glow,
Into streams Undine flow,
Vanish Sylph, and, Kobold, double
Shall his turmoil be and trouble!

If a man know not the lore
Of the Elemental Four,

The power of each and property,
Of the world of spirits he
Never will the master be.

Hence, as ye came, in flash and flame,
Salamander!
Flow out and be seen a rushing stream,
Undine!
Blaze on the air a meteor fair,
Sylph!
Us with timely help befriend,
Incubus! Incubus!
Come forth, come forth, and make an end!

No one of the Four is lodged in the beast.
'Tis plain, I have not touched the case.
Quite still he lies, and grins in my face,
His withers I have not wrung in the least.
Now shall ye hear me, whatever ye are,
Conjure with a spell more potent by far.

Com'st thou here, from hell's confine
A fugitive, behold this sign,
Holy emblem, 'neath whose power
All the fiends of darkness cower!
Its bristles rise! Behold it now to monstrous size dilate!
Thou thing accursed and reprobate!
Canst thou read the holy token,
Him that never was create,
Him that never may be spoken,
All from sky to sky pervading,
Vilely done to death degrading?

Spellbound behind the stove it stands,
And like an elephant expands!

It fills the alcove up complete:
Into a mist 'twill melt away.
Ascend not to the ceiling! Lay
Thyself down at the master's feet!
Thou seest, I threaten not in vain.
I'll scorch thee up with holy fire!
For that dread light best not remain,
Which burns with threefold glow! Retire,
Nor wait till I, thou spawn of hell,
Let loose on thee my mightiest spell!

MEPHISTOPHELES *(comes forward, as the mist subsides, in the dress of a travelling scholar, from behind the stove.*

What is the use of all this mighty stir?
Can I in anything oblige you, sir?

FAUST.

So this, then, was the kernel of the brute!
A travelling scholar? Here's a pleasant jest!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Your learned worship humbly I salute.
You gave me a fine sweating, I protest.

FAUST.

What is thy name?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Methinks the question's mean,
For one who holds the Word so very cheap,
Who, scorning all mere semblances, has been
Brooding on things in their quintessence deep!

FAUST.

Of gentlemen like you one may
The nature mostly from the names surmise,

Where what ye are they all too plainly say,
When they "Destroyer" style you, "Flygod, Prince of lies!"
Speak, then! Who art thou?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Part of the power, that still
Produces Good, while still devising Ill.

FAUST.

A rare enigma! Say what it implies.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The spirit I, that evermore denies.
And rightly am I thus employed,
For surely nought was e'er begot,
But it deserved to be destroyed;
So were it better, things should not
Be into being brought at all.
Thus all these matters, which you call
Sin, Mischief,—Evil in a word,
Are my congenial element.

FAUST.

I heard
You call yourself a part, yet see
You stand there whole as whole can be.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Truth, truth, I vow, all truth and modesty!
Though man, that Microcosm of Folly, seem
A perfect whole to his own self-esteem,
Myself I, being less pretentious, call
Part of the part, which at the first was all;
Part of the darkness, from whose womb sprang light,
Proud light, which now doth with its dam contest

Her ancient rank, the space she filled of right;
And yet it can't succeed, for, strive its best,
It cleaves to bodies, fettered to them fast:
It streams from bodies, makes them fair and bright;
A body intercepts its passage, so
I hope, when bodies come to grief at last,
It will with them to sheer perdition go.

FAUST.

Your high vocation now I understand.
You find, you can't annihilate wholesale,
So on a smaller scale you try your hand.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And let me own, to very small avail.
That which is nothing's opposite,
This something, this great lumbering world, although
I've launched at it, with all my might,
Storm, deluge, earthquake, levin-brand,
I can't effect its overthrow;
It hangs together still, good sea and land.
And then these misbegots accurst,
This spawn of brutes and men, alas!
Defy me, let me try my worst.
How many have I sent to grass,
Yet young fresh blood, do what I will,
Keeps ever circulating still.
In water, in the earth, in air,
In wet, dry, warm, cold, everywhere,
Germs without number are unfurled.
And but for fire and fire alone,
There would be nothing in the world,
That I could truly call my own.

FAUST.

So, that cold devil's fist of thine
Thou dost not scruple to oppose

To the unsleeping power benign,
Beneath whose breath all lives and grows:
It laughs to scorn your threats malign.
Strange son of chaos, hadst thou not
Best start upon another tack?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It certainly is worth a thought!
More about this when I come back,
But for the present have I leave,
Your leave, to take myself away?

FAUST.

Why you should ask, I can't conceive.
We're strangers from this hour no more;
So visit me in future, pray,
Just when and how the fancy strikes you.
Here is the window, here the door,
And there a chimney, if it likes you.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'd very quickly make my exit,
But that a trifling hindrance checks it;
The wizard's foot,—alas! 'tis true—
Upon your threshold—

FAUST.

Ha, 'tis well!
The Pentagram perplexes you.
But answer me, thou son of hell,
If that can thrust you backward, how
Contrived you to get in but now?
How came a spirit so astute
To tumble into such a snare?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You'll find, if you look closely to 't,
It is not drawn with proper care.
The outer angle's incomplete.
You may discover at a glance,
The lines converge, but do not meet.

FAUST.

That was indeed a lucky chance!
So you should be my prisoner, then?
Most rare good fortune, truly!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

When
The poodle bounded in, he took
No heed of what he was about.
Now things wear quite another look;
The devil's in, and can't get out.

FAUST.

Why through the window not withdraw?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Of fiends and goblins 'tis a law,
Get in howe'er they please, but so
As they came in, out they must go.
Free in the first choice, in the last
We're very slaves!

FAUST.

So even hell
Has got its legal code. 'Tis well.
Then with you gentlemen a fast
And binding contract may be made?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ay, and implicitly obeyed.
Whate'er is promised you by us
You to the letter shall enjoy,
Without abatement or alloy.
A theme too grave this to discuss
So hurriedly; when next we meet,
We'll talk it fully out; but now
I beg, nay, earnestly entreat,
This once you'll let me make my bow.

FAUST.

One moment, by your leave! I burn
For such rare news as yours must be.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Let me go now, I'll soon return,
And then ask what you like of me.

FAUST.

Of choice, and not by my device,
You ran yourself into this plight.
Once catch the devil, hold him tight!
He'll scarcely let you catch him twice.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, if you wish it, here I stay,
On one condition, that the while
I with my sleights familiar may
Your moments worthily beguile.

FAUST.

Agreed! you have my leave,—but mind,
Your sleights are of the pleasing kind!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Within this hour, my friend, be sure,
You for your senses shall procure
More than you heretofore have found
Within the year's unvaried round.
The songs my dainty spirits sing,
The lovely visions which they bring,
Are no mere empty glamour, no!
Your very smell entranced shall be,
Your palate lapped in ecstasy,
Your every nerve with rapture glow.
No preparation here we need.
We're in our places, so proceed!

SPIRITS.

Disappear, disappear,
Ye dark arches drear!
Let the blue sky of heaven
Look down on us here,
The beautiful blue sky,
With friendliest cheer!
Hence, clouds, begone,
That gloomily darkle!
Lo now, anon,
Little stars sparkle,
Mellower suns
Shine in on us here!
Heaven's sons, bright
In the spirit's arraying,
In hovering flight
Are bending and swaying.
Souls with a passionate
Upward aspiring,
View them, pursue them,
Soaring untiring!

And ribbons gay
Are flashing and gleaming,
Where lovers stray,
Musing and dreaming,
Stray on by grove
And meadow, requiting
Love with return of love,
Life for life plighting!
Bower on bower shining!
Tendrils entwining!
Grapes in huge clusters
Piled up profuse,
Under the winepress
Spurting their juice.
Seething and foaming,
Wines gush into rills,
O'er the enamelled stones
Rush from the hills,
Broaden to lakes, that
Reflect from their sheen
Mountains and brakes, that
Are mantled in green.
And birds of all feather,
Pure rapture inhaling,
Sunwards are sailing,
Sailing together,
On to the isles,
That lie smiling and dreaming,
Where the bright billows
Are rippling and gleaming;
Where we see jocund bands
Dance on before us,
Over the meadow-lands
Shouting in chorus,
All in the free air
Every way rambling;

Some up the mountains
Climbing and scrambling;
Some o'er the lakes and seas
Floating and swimming,
Others upon the breeze
Flying and skimming;
All to the sources
Of life pressing onward,
Flushed by the forces,
That carry them sunward;
On to the measureless
Spaces above them,
On where the stars bless
The spirits that love them.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He sleeps! Well done, ye little airy sprites!
You've fairly lullabied his wits to sleep:
I'm in your debt for these melodious sleights.
Thou'rt not the man, at least, not yet, to keep
The devil in thy clutch. Around him play
With soothing visions from the realm of dream;
Across his brain let wild illusions stray,
And fool his fancy with their meteor gleam!
Ha! tooth of rat, methinks, would serve me well,
To break me up this threshold's spell.
No need of lengthened conjuration. Hark!
There rustles one, my voice will quickly mark!

The master of the rats and mice,
Of flies, and frogs, and bugs, and lice,
Commands you straightway to appear,
And nibble at this threshold here,
Where now he smears it o'er with oil.
Ha! Here you are! Now, to your toil!

The point that kept me back lies there
Just in the front beside the stair.
One nibble more, your task's complete!
Now, Faustus, now dream on till next we meet.
[*Exit.*

FAUST (*awaking*).

Am I again befooled? Vanish they so,
The throng of spirits that my fancy shaped?
Was then the fiend a dream, a lying show,
And that a poodle, which but now escaped?

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Faust's Study.

Faust, Mephistopheles.

Faust.

A knock? Come in! Again my quiet broken?

Mephistopheles.

'Tis I.

Faust.

Come in!

Mephistopheles.

Thrice must the words be spoken.

Faust.

Come in, then!

Mephistopheles (*entering*).

So! That job's discussed.
We shall be firmer friends, I trust;
For, to dispel your fancies grim,
Behold me here, a springald trim,
In jerkin red, and laced with gold,
A cape of stiffest silk, a bold

Cock-feather in my cap; and see!
A long sharp rapier to boot!
Now, prithee, be advised by me,
And get just such another suit;
So, casting every trammel loose,
You'll learn what life is, and its use.

FAUST.

In every dress I'm sure to feel the dire
Constraints of earthly life severely:
I am too old to trifle merely,
Too young to be without desire.
What from the world have I to gain?
"Thou shalt refrain! Thou shalt refrain!"
This is the everlasting song,
That's hummed and droned in every ear,
Which every hour, our whole life long,
Is croaked to us in cadence drear.
I wake each morning in despair,
And bitter tears could weep, to see the sun
Dawn on the day, that in its round will ne'er
Accomplish one poor wish of mine, not one;—
Yea, that with froward captiousness impairs
Each joy, of which I've dreamt, of half its zest,
And with life's thousand mean and paltry cares
Clogs the creations of my busy breast.
And when at evening's weary close
I lay me down in anguish on my bed,
There, even there, for me is no repose,
Scared as I am by visions wild and dread.
The god, who in my breast abides,
Through all its depths can stir my soul,
My every faculty he sways and guides,
Yet can he not what lies without control.
And thus by life, as by a load, oppressed,
I long for death, existence I detest.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And yet death never is a wholly welcome guest!

FAUST.

Oh happy he, around whose brows he winds
In victory's glorious hour the blood-stained bays,
Whom on the bosom of his girl he finds,
Warm from the dance's wild and maddening maze!
Oh had it been, 'neath that high spirit's might,
My fate, while tranced in bliss, in death to sink!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yet was there one, who on a certain night
A certain dark-brown mixture feared to drink.

FAUST.

You have a taste, it seems, for playing spy.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Omniscient, no! Still few things 'scape my eye.

FAUST.

If, when my brain was racked and reeling,
A sweet and old familiar chime
Beguiled my all of childish feeling
With memories of a happier time;
Now do I curse whate'er doth pen
With wizard coil these souls of ours,
And chains them to this dreary den
With cozening and deceitful powers.
And chief be curst the proud conceit,
Which girds our minds as with a fence
Curst be the semblances that cheat,
And play and palter with our sense!
Curst be the false and flattering dream
Of fame—a name beyond the grave,

Curst all that ours we fondly deem,
As wife and child, as plough and slave!
Be Mammon curst, when he with pelf
Inspires to deeds were else renown,
When he, to sot and pamper self,
Makes silken smooth our couch of down!
On wine's balsamic juice a curse,
A curse on love's ecstatic thrall,
A curse on hope, on faith, and worse
On patience be my curse than all!

Chorus of Invisible Spirits.

Woe, woe!
Thus hast laid it low,
The beautiful world,
With merciless blow.
It totters, it crumbles, it tumbles abroad.
Shattered and crushed by a demigod.
We trail
The ruins to chaos away,
And wail
The beauty that's lost, well-a-day!
Of the children of clay
Thou mighty one, thou,
Fairer, more glorious, now
Build it once more,
Within thine own bosom build it up! Here
A new life-career
With quickened sense
Commence!
And songs, unheard before,
Shall chime upon thine ear!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

These my tiny spirits be.
Hark, with what sagacity

They advise thee to pursue
Action, pleasure ever new!
Out into the world so fair
They would lure and lead thee hence,
From this lonely chamber, where
Stagnate life and soul and sense.

No longer trifle with the wretchedness,
That, like a vulture, gnaws your life away!
The worst society will teach you this,
You are a man 'mongst men, and feel as they.
Yet 'tis not meant, I pray you, see,
To thrust you 'mong the rabble rout;—
I'm none of your great folks, no doubt,
But if, in fellowship with me,
To range through life you are content,
I will most cheerfully consent
To be your own upon the spot.
I am your chum. You'd rather not?
Well! If your scruples it will save,
I am your servant, yea, your slave!

FAUST.

And in return what must I do for you?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, time enough to talk of that!

FAUST.

Nay, nay!
The devil's selfish—is and was alway—
And is not like for mere God's sake to do
A liberal turn to any child of clay.
Out with the terms, and plainly! Such as thou
Are dangerous servants in a house, I trow.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I bind myself to serve you here,—to do
Your bidding promptly, whatsoe'er it be,
And, when we come together yonder, you
Are then to do the same for me.

FAUST.

I prize that yonder at a rush!
Only this world to atoms crush,
And then that other may arise!
From earth my every pleasure flows,
Yon Sun looks down upon my woes,
Let me but part myself from those,
Then come what may, in any guise!
To idle prate I'll close mine ears,
If we hereafter hate or love,
Or if there be in yonder spheres,
As here, an Under and Above!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You're in the proper mood to venture! Bind
Yourself, and pleasure in my sleights you'll find,
While this life lasts. I'll give you more,
Than eye of man hath ever seen before.

FAUST.

What wilt thou give, thou sorry devil? When
Were the aspiring souls of men
Fathomed by such a thing as thee?
Oh, thou hast food that satisfieth never,
Gold, ruddy gold thou hast, that restlessly
Slips, like quicksilver, through the hand for ever;
A game, where we must losers be;
A girl, that, on my very breast,
My neighbour woos with smile and wink;

Fame's rapturous flash of godlike zest,
That, meteor-like, is doomed to sink.
Show me the fruit that, ere 'tis plucked, doth rot,
And trees that every day grow green anew!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Such task as this affrights me not.
I have such treasures at command for you.
But, my good friend, the time draws nigh,
When we may banquet on the best in peace!

FAUST.

If e'er at peace on sluggard's couch I lie,
Then may my life upon the instant cease!
Cheat thou me ever by thy glozing wile,
So that I cease to scorn myself, or e'er
My senses with a perfect joy beguile,
Then be that day my last! I offer fair,
How say'st thou?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Done!

FAUST.

My hand upon it! There!
If to the passing moment e'er I say,
"Oh linger yet! thou art so fair!"
Then cast me into chains you may,
Then will I die without a care!
Then may the death-bell sound its call,
Then art thou from thy service free,
The clock may stand, the index fall,
And time and tide may cease for me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Think well; we shan't forget the terms you name.

FAUST.

Your perfect right I must allow.
Not rashly to the pact I came.
I am a slave as I am now;
Yours or another's, 'tis to me the same!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then at the Doctors' feast this very day
Will I my post, as your attendant, take.
Just one thing more! To guard against mistake,
Oblige me with a line or two, I pray.

FAUST.

Pedant, must thou have writing too?
Hast thou no true man, or man's promise known?
Is not my word of mouth enough for you,
To pledge my days for all eternity?
Does not the universe go raving on,
In all its ever-eddying currents, free
To pass from change to change, and I alone,
Shall a mere promise curb or fetter me?
Yet doth man's heart so hug the dear deceit,
Who would its hold without a pang undo?
Blest he, whose soul is with pure truth replete,
No sacrifice shall ever make him rue.
But, oh, your stamped and scribbled parchment sheet
A spectre is, which all men shrink to view.
The word dies ere it quits the pen,
And wax and sheep-skin lord it then.
What would you have, spirit of ill!
Brass, marble, parchment, paper?—Say,
Am I to write with pen, or style, or graver?
I care not—choose whiche'er you will.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why throw your eloquence away,
Or give it such a very pungent savour?
Pshaw! Any scrap will do—'tis quite the same—
With the least drop of blood just sign your name.

FAUST.

If that will make you happy, why, a claim
So very whimsical I'll freely favour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Blood is a juice of quite peculiar kind.

FAUST.

Fear not that I the compact will evade!
My life's whole struggle, heart and mind,
Chimes with the promise I have made.
Too high I've soared—too proudly dreamt,
I'm only peer for such as thee;
The Mighty Spirit spurns me with contempt,
And Nature veils her face from me.
Thought's chain is snapt;—for many a day
I've loathed all knowledge every way.
So quench we now our passions' fires
In sense and sensual delights,
Unveil all hidden magic sleights,
To minister to our desires!
Let us plunge in the torrent of time, and range
Through the weltering chaos of chance and change,
Then pleasure and pain, disaster and gain,
May course one another adown my brain.
Change and excitement may work as they can,
Rest there is none for the spirit of man.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To you is set nor goal nor stint.
If you'd sip the sweetest of everything,
And hawk at pleasure upon the wing,
Much joy, I'm sure, I wish you in't.
Only fall to, and don't be coy.

FAUST.

Again I say, my thoughts are not of joy.
I devote myself to the whirl and roar,
To the bliss that throbs with a pulse like pain,
To the hate that we dote on and fondle o'er,
The defeat that inspirits both nerves and brain.
Of its passion for knowledge cured, my soul
Henceforth shall expand to all forms of woe,
And all that is all human nature's dole
In my heart of hearts I shall feel and know;
With highest, lowest, in spirit I shall cope,
Pile on my breast their joys, their griefs, their cares,
So all men's souls shall come within my scope,
And mine at last go down a wreck like theirs.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, trust to me, who have through many a year
On this tough morsel chewed the cud,
That from the cradle to the bier
No man of mortal flesh and blood
Hath e'er digested the old leaven.
Trust one of us, this whole so vast
Is only for the God of Heaven!
In everlasting radiance He is glassed,
Us hath He into outer darkness cast,
And you, you mortals, only may
See day succeed to night, and night to day.

FAUST.

Nay, but I will.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That's well enough to say;
Only I don't quite see my way.
Art's long, time short. You'd best permit
Yourself to be advised a bit.
Club with a poet; soaring free,
Let him the realm of fancy sweep,
And every noble quality
Upon your honoured forehead heap;
The lion's magnanimity,
The fleetness of the hind,
The fiery blood of Italy,
The Northern's constant mind.
Let him for you the art divine,
High aims with cunning to combine,
And, with young blood at fever full,
To love on system and by rule.
A gentleman of such a kind
I should myself be glad to find,
And, 'sooth, by me so rare a wight
Should be Sir Microcosmus hight.

FAUST.

What am I, then, if never by no art
The crown of mortal nature may be gained,
For which our every energy is strained?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou art, when all's done, what thou art.
A periwig with countless ringlets buy,
Array thy feet in socks a cubit high,
Still, still thou wilt remain just what thou art.

FAUST.

'Tis true, I feel! In vain have I amassed
Within me all the treasures of man's mind,
And when I pause, and sit me down at last,
No new power welling inwardly I find;
A hairbreadth is not added to my height,
I am no nearer to the Infinite.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Good sir, you view these matters just
As any common mortal would;
But take a higher strain we must,
Nor let life's joys our grasp elude.
Why, what the deuce! Sure, foot and hand,
And blood and brain are yours! And what
I can enjoy, control, command,
Is it the less my own for that?
If I for horses six can pay,
Their powers are added to my store;
A proper man I dash away,
As though I had legs twenty-four.
Up then, no more a dreamer be,
But forth into the world with me!
I tell you what; your speculating wretch
Is like a beast upon a barren waste,
Round, ever round, by an ill spirit chased,
Whilst all about him fair green pastures stretch.

FAUST.

But how begin?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We start at once.
Ugh! what a place of torture dire!
Call you this life—yourself to tire,

And some few youngsters, each a dunce?
Leave that to neighbour Paunch to do.
Why plague yourself with threshing straw?
What's best of all that's known to you,
You dare not tell these striplings raw.
I hear one now upon the stair.

FAUST.

I cannot see him.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Long and late,
Poor boy, he's waited. In despair
We must not send him from the gate.
Give me your cap and gown: the mask,
You'll see, will fit me to a hair.
[*Changes his dress.*
Now leave all to my wit. I ask
But fifteen minutes. Go now! There!
And for our pleasant trip prepare. [*Exit* FAUST.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*putting on* FAUST'S *gown.*)

Only scorn reason, knowledge, all that can
Give strength, or might, or dignity to man,
And let thyself be only more and more
Besotted by the spirit of lies
With faith in necromantic lore,
Its shams, delusions, sorceries,
And thou art mine beyond recall!—
Fate to this man a soul has given,
That brooks not to be held in thrall,
But onward evermore is driven,
And, on its own mad fancies bent,
In earth's delights finds no content.
Him will I drag through all the fires
Of passions, appetites, desires,

Through all the dull unmeaning round
Of man and woman, sight and sound.
Oh, he shall sprawl, be stunned, stick fast
In sheer bewilderment at last.
His longings infinite to whet,
Dainties and drink shall dance before
His fevered lips; nor shall he get
The peace he'll pray for evermore.
Here and hereafter such as he
Are marked for doom; and even although
He had not sold himself to me,
He must perforce have come to woe.

Enter a STUDENT.

STUDENT.

To town quite recently I came,
And make it, sir, my earliest care
To see and talk with one, whose name
Is named with reverence everywhere.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You're too polite! A man you see,
Like scores of other men, in me.
Elsewhere have you not found your way?

STUDENT.

Take me in hand, oh do, sir, pray!
I've every wish, nay have, in truth,
A very passion, to be taught,
Some money, too, and health and youth;
My mother scarcely could be brought
To part with me; but come I would,
To learn whate'er 'tis best I should.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

If such be really the case,
You've come to just the proper place.

STUDENT.

Yet I, the honest truth to say,
Already wish myself away!
These walls and lecture-rooms I find
By no means of a pleasant kind.
All is so close, so cramped, so mean,
No trees, nor anything that's green,—
Mewed up in them, my spirits sink;
I neither hear, nor see, nor think.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Habit alone cures that. Just so
The child at first will not, you know,
Take kindly to its mother's breast,
But soon it suckles there with zest.
Even thus at wisdom's breast will you
Each day find pleasure ever new.

STUDENT.

Upon her neck I'll hang with joy; the way
To clamber there, do you, sir, only say.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ere you go further, say, on which
Of all the faculties your fancies pitch.

STUDENT.

Sir, my ambition is to be
A scholar widely read and sound,
All things on earth, in heaven, or sea,
To grasp with comprehensive view.

In short, to master all the round
Of science and of nature too.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You're on the right track; only don't
Get scatter-brained in the pursuit.

STUDENT.

Oh never fear, sir;—that I won't.
Body and soul I'll buckle to't.
Yet should I like upon occasion
Some freedom, some small relaxation,
When skies are bright, and fields are gay,
Upon a summer's holiday.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Use well your time,—so fast it flies;
Yet Method teaches, in what wise
Of time itself you may make prize.
And, first and foremost to that end,
I counsel you, my dear young friend,
A course of Logic to attend.
Your mind will then be so well braced,
In Spanish boots so tightly laced,
That henceforth, by discretion taught,
'Twill creep along the path of thought,
And not, with all the winds that blow,
Go Will-o'-Wisping to and fro.
Then many a good day will be spent
In teaching, that the things you used
To knock off at a stroke, with just
As little thought or pains, as went
To eating or to drinking, must
Be by First! Second! Third! produced.
The web of thought, we may assume,
Is like some triumph of the loom,

Where one small simple treddle starts
A thousand threads to motion,—where
The flying shuttle shoots and darts,
Now over here, now under there.
We look, but see not how, so fast
Thread blends with thread, and twines, and mixes,
When lo! one single stroke at last
The thousand combinations fixes;
In steps me then Philosophy, and proves,
That, being set in certain grooves,
Things which have passed before your eyes
Could by no chance be otherwise.
The First was so, the Second so,
Ergo the Third and Fourth ensued;
But given no First nor Second, no
Third, yea, nor Fourth had been or could.
Scholars in matters of this kind
Are everywhere profound believers,
Yet none of them, that I can find,
Have signalised themselves as weavers.
He that would study and portray
A living creature, thinks it fit
To start with finding out the way
To drive the spirit out of it.
This done, he holds within his hand
The pieces to be named and stated,
But, ah! the spirit-tie, that spanned
And knit them, has evaporated.
This process chemic science pleases
To call Naturæ Encheiresis,
And, in the very doing so, it
Makes of itself a mock, and does not know it.

STUDENT.

I don't entirely comprehend.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In that respect you'll quickly mend,
When once you learn, with true insight
To classify all things aright.

STUDENT.

I'm so perplexed with what you've said,
That just for all the world I feel,
As if some clattering mill-wheel
Were turning, turning in my head.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Before all other studies you
Must Metaphysics next pursue.
There see, that you profoundly scan
What ne'er was meant for brain of man;
Be thought or no thought in your head,
Fine phrases there will do instead:
And mind, that this half-year in all
You do you're most methodical.
Five hours of lecture daily; so
Be in your seat right to the minute!
Prepare the subject, ere you go,
Be thoroughly well read up in it.
Thus see, that the professor's stating
No more than all the textbooks show;
Yet still write down each word, as though
He were the Holy Ghost dictating.

STUDENT.

No need to say that to me twice.
I see 'tis excellent advice;
For we take home, and study, quite
At ease, what's down in black and white.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But choose some Faculty.

STUDENT.

At the mere name
Of Jurisprudence I rebel.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In that, I own, you're not so much to blame,
For what that science is, I know full well.
Laws are transmitted, as one sees,
Just like inherited disease.
They're handed down from race to race,
And noiseless glide from place to place.
Reason they turn to nonsense; worse,
They make beneficence a curse!
Ah me! That you're a grandson you,
As long as you're alive, shall rue.
The law, which is within us placed
At birth, unhappily about
That law there's never any doubt.

STUDENT.

Your words have heightened my distaste.
Oh fortunate the man, whom you
Vouchsafe to give instruction to!
I almost think, Theology
Would be the study best for me.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I should not wish, friend, to mislead you;
Yet in that branch of lore, indeed, you
Will find it hard to keep away
From paths, that carry far astray.
In it so much hid poison lies,

Which you may fail to recognise,
Nay, will most probably confound
With the true medicine around.
But here again one rule is clear;
To one, and but one guide, give ear,
Take all his words as gospel in,
And swear by them through thick and thin.
As a broad principle, hold on
By words, words, words! So you, anon,
Through their unfailing doors the fane
Of perfect certainty will gain.

STUDENT.

But surely, sir, a meaning should
In words be always understood?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No doubt, no doubt! Yet 'twere absurd,
Upon that point to feel too much concern;
Since just where meaning fails, a word
Comes patly in to serve your turn.
Words, my young friend,—why, nothing suits
So well as matter for disputes;
With words your systems you can weave in,
Words are such fine things to believe in,
And from a word no jot or tittle
Can be abstracted, much or little.

STUDENT.

I fear my numerous questions tease you;
Yet once more I must trouble you.
On Medicine I would fain, so please you,
Receive a pregnant word or two.
Three years, they slip away so fast,
And, heavens! the field is quite too vast.
Still with a hint a man may hope
His way with more success to grope.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

This prosing bores me. I must play
The devil now in my own way.
Aloud.] Well, any simpleton may seize
The soul of Medicine with ease—
You simply study through and through
The world of man and nature too,
To end with leaving things to God,
To make or mar them. 'Tis in vain,
That you go mooning all abroad,
Picking up science grain by grain:
Each man learns only what he can.
But he that has the gift and power,
To profit by the passing hour,
He is your proper man!
You're not ill built,—will, I conceive,
Show mettle on occasion due;—
If you but in yourself believe,
Others will then believe in you.
Especially be sure to find
The way to manage the womenkind.
Their everlasting Ohs! and Ahs!
Of this be sure,
Whate'er their fashion or their cause,
All from one point admit of cure.
With air respectful and demure
Approach as they advance, and, mum!
You have them all beneath your thumb.
But a degree must first instil
Conviction in them, that your skill
Surpasses other people's; then
At once they make you free of all
Those tête-à-tête endearments small,
Years scarce secure for other men:
The little pulse adroitly squeeze.

With looks on fire with passion seize,
And boldly clasp the tapering waist,
To see if it be tightly laced.

STUDENT.

Oh, that is much more in my way!
One sees at least the where and how.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Dear friend, all theory is grey,
And green life's golden tree.

STUDENT.

I vow,
I'm like one in a dream. Might I
Intrude on you some other time, to hear
Your wisdom make the grounds of all this clear?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

So far as I can serve you, I will try.

STUDENT.

I cannot tear myself away,
Let me before you, sir, my album lay;
Some small memorial of your favour, pray?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

With all my heart. [*Writes and returns the book.*

STUDENT (*reads*).

Eritis sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum.
[*Closes it reverentially, and retires.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Take for your law the ancient saw, and that cousin of mine, the snake.

And, with that likeness of yours to God, your heart is
like to break.

FAUST (*entering*).

And now where shall we go?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You've but to name
What place you choose,—to me 'tis quite the same.
Suppose we see the small folk first,
And then upon the great ones burst.
With what delight, what profit, too,
You'll revel the pleasant circuit through!

FAUST.

But with my long beard can I face
Society? I want the grace,
The easy, smooth, and polished air,
That of a man's expected there.
Nor could I learn it, if I would.
Adapt myself I never could
To what the world demands of all.
And in a crowd I feel so small,
'Tis certain I shall always be
Embarrassed when in company.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

All that will come in time. Be self-possessed!
In that one word is life's whole art expressed.

FAUST.

But how are we to travel? Where
Are horses, servants, carriage, pray?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

This cloak out so we've but to lay,
And 'twill transport us through the air.

In this bold trip, no need to cumber
Yourself with luggage and such lumber.
A little gas, which I've at hand,
Will waft us straight o'er sea and land,
And, as we travel lightly, too,
On at a rattling pace we'll spin.
I wish you joy, friend, of the new
Career of life you now begin.

SCENE II.—Auerbach's Cellar at Leipzig.

A Drinking Party of Boon Companions.

Frosch.

Will nobody drink? Is there never a joke,
Among you, or bit of fun to poke?
At other times you can blaze away;
But, egad! you're all like damp straw to-day.

Brander.

Your fault! You do nothing to make us jolly,
No beastliness, no stupid folly.

Frosch (*flings a glass of wine at his head*).

There's both for you!

Brander.

Brute! Beast!

Frosch.

You sought it
My lad of wax, and now you've caught it!

SIEBEL.

Any fellow that quarrels, kick him out!
Come, clear your throats, boys, swill and shout
Hip, hip, huzza!

ALTMAYER.

I'm lost! Oh dear!
Some cotton! This rowdy splits my ear!

SIEBEL.

Until the vaults with the echo reel,
The strength of the bass you never feel.

FROSCH.

Right! Those that don't like it needn't stay!
Ah, tara, lara, da!

ALTMAYER.

Ah, tara, lara, da!

FROSCH.

Our throats are tuned up, so fire away!

(*Sings*).

The dear old Roman Empire, how
Does it manage to hang together?

BRANDER.

A filthy song! A political song! Fie, fie!
A most offensive song, say I.
Thank God each morning you have not
To care for that same Roman Empire got.
I hold it a thing to be grateful for,
That I'm neither Kaiser nor Chancellor.
Still, we should have a chief, and may, I hope.

We will, we shall, we must elect a Pope!
I need not tell you, for you're all aware,
What qualities weigh heaviest there,
And lift a man into the chair.

FROSCH (*sings*).

Fly away, fly away, Lady Nightingale,
Over the mountain, and over the dale!
Fly to my sweetheart out over the sea,
And greet her a thousand times from me.

SIEBEL.

No greetings, ho, to sweetings! 'Tis exceedingly improper!

FROSCH.

I will greet her, kiss her, treat her! You shan't put on me a stopper.

(*Sings*).

Undo the bolts at dead of night,
And let the lad that loves you in,
But in the grey of the morning light
Bar him without, and yourself within!

SIEBEL.

Sing on! Our ears with her perfections din!
My time will come to laugh, when you look blue.
She led me a fool's dance, and so she will lead you.
I'd give her for a lover a hobgoblin,
To toy with her on cross-roads in the dark;
An old buck-goat, back from the Blocksberg hobbling,
Might tickle her up in passing for a lark!
The blood and bone of any stout young blade
Are much too good for such an arrant jade.
No, no, the only greeting I will hear of
Is smashing all the gipsy's windows clear off.

BRANDER (*striking the table*).

Silence! Silence! To me give ear!
You'll all admit that I know what's what.
We have some love-sick spoonies here,
And I must treat them to something pat,
And like to enliven their doleful cheer.
Of the very last fashion is my strain.
Full chorus, mind, for the refrain!

(*Sings.*)

Once in a cellar there lived a rat,
His paunch it grew a thumper,
For he lived on nothing but butter and fat,
Not Luther's self was plumper.
The cook laid poison for him one day,
And he fell into a terrible way,
As if love's tortures twinged him!

CHORUS.

As if love's tortures twinged him!

And he ran out, and round about,
And he could not think what ailed him,
And he scratched, and clawed, and nibbled, and gnawed,
But his fury nought availed him;
He felt the pain shoot from head to foot,
'Twas soon all up with him, poor brute,
As if love's tortures twinged him!

CHORUS.

As if love's tortures twinged him!

In pain, in dismay, in broad noonday,
He dashed into the kitchen,
Fell down on the hearth, and there he lay,
Convulsed with a woeful twitching;

But the cook she laughed, when his pain she spied,
"Ha! ha! He's at his last gasp!" she cried,
As if love's tortures twinged him!

CHORUS.

As if love's tortures twinged him!

SIEBEL.

How easy it is to tickle flats!
To lay down poison for poor rats
Is wit of such a spicy flavour!

BRANDER.

No doubt they stand high in your favour.

ALTMAYER.

Fatguts is down in his luck,—'tis that,
Makes him soft-hearted and dejected;
Poor devil, he sees in the bloated rat
The image of himself reflected.

Enter FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Before all things I must bring you to
A circle of jolly dogs, that you
May see how lightly life can sit.
Every day is a feast with such
Hard-drinking fellows as these. With much
Self-satisfaction and little wit,
Day after day, they may all be found,
Spinning along the same narrow round,
Like a young kitten pursuing its tail.
So long as their heads don't ache or ail,
And with mine host they can score their way,
No care, or misgiving at all have they.

BRANDER.

Strangers, and just arrived, that's clear,
Their cut and deportment are so queer!
Not been an hour in town, I'll swear.

FROSCH.

For once you're right, old fellow, there.
Leipzig for ever! 'Tis Paris in small!
It gives us a style, sir, a style to us all.

SIEBEL.

For what do you these strangers take?

FROSCH.

Just leave them to me. In a brace of shakes
Out of these fellows I'll worm the truth,
As easy as draw you a young child's tooth.
Noblemen I should say they were,
They've such a haughty dissatisfied air.

BRANDER.

Mountebanks! That's about their level!

ALTMAYER.

Perhaps!

FROSCH.

I'll trot them. Pray you, note!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

These scum would never surmise the devil,
Although he had them by the throat!

FAUST.

Your servant, sirs!

SIEBEL.

The same to you!
[*Aside, looking askance at* MEPHISTOPHELES.
Limps on one foot? So queerly, too!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Beside you have we leave our chairs to set?
Instead of good drink, then, which here we cannot get.
We shall have your good company for cheer.

ALTMAYER.

You're mighty hard to please, it would appear!

FROSCH.

Just fresh from Rippach, aint you? I daresay,
You supped, now, with Squire Hans, upon the way?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To-day we galloped past his door;
But had much talk with him, the time before,
About his cousins here; and he presents
To each of you through us his special compliments.
[*Bowing towards* FROSCH.

ALTMAYER (*aside*).

That's home! A knowing dog!

SIEBEL.

A biting wit!

FROSCH.

I'll serve him out, you'll see. Just wait a bit!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Did we not hear—I can't be wrong—
Well-practised voices chanting chorus?

No doubt, the vaulted ceiling o'er us
Must echo rarely to a song.

FROSCH.

You are a connoisseur of some pretence?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh no! My powers are weak, my love immense.

ALTMAYER.

Tip us a stave!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A score, if you incline.

SIEBEL.

Brand new, then, let it be, some jolly strain!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We have quite recently returned from Spain,
That beauteous land of song and wine.

(*Sings.*)

A king there was, be't noted,
Who had a lusty flea.

FROSCH.

Mark him, a flea! You take the jest?
Now, by my faith, a royal guest!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*sings*).

A king there was, be't noted,
Who had a lusty flea,
And on this flea he doated,
And loved him tenderly.

A message to the tailor goes,
Swift came the man of stitches;
"Ho, measure the youngster here for clothes.
And measure him for breeches!"

BRANDER.

Mind you impress on Snip to take
Especial care about the fit,
And, as he loves his head, to make
The breeches without wrinkles sit.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*resumes his song*).

In silk and satin of the best
Soon was the flea arrayed there,
Ribbons had he upon his breast,
Likewise a star displayed there;
Prime minister anon he grew,
With star of huge dimensions,
And his kindred, male and female too,
Got titles, rank, and pensions.

And lords and ladies, high and fair,
Were grievously tormented;
Sore bitten the queen and her maidens were.
But they did not dare resent it.
They even were afraid to scratch,
Howe'er our friends might rack them,
But we without a scruple catch,
And when we catch we crack them.

CHORUS.

But we without a scruple catch,
And when we catch, we crack them.

FROSCH.

Bravo! First-rate!

SIEBEL.

So perish all
The race of fleas, both great and small.

BRANDER.

Catch me them daintily on the hip
Between the nail and the finger-tip!

ALTMAYER.

Huzzah for freedom! Huzzah for wine!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To pledge a bumper glass to freedom, I'd be glad,
Were not this wine of yours so execrably bad.

SIEBEL.

Let's hear no more of that, Sir Superfine!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But that our host were apt to be offended,
I'd give these worthy fellows here
From our own cellar something splendid!

SIEBEL.

I'll make that square, so never fear.

FROSCH.

Make good your words, and you're a trump. The sample,
I charge you, though, to make it ample.
For, if I have to judge of tipple, I
Must have a good mouthful to judge it by.

ALTMAYER (*aside*).

Soho! They're from the Rhine, I see.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A gimlet here?

BRANDER.

For what, now, can that be?
You can't have got the hogsheads at the door?

ALTMAYER.

The landlord's tool-chest's yonder on the floor.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*taking the gimlet, to* FROSCH).

Now say, for which you have a mind?

FROSCH.

What! Have you them of every kind?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Name each his choice, strong, sparkling, old, or heady?

ALTMAYER (*to* FROSCH).

Aha! your lips are watering already.

FROSCH.

Let it be Rhenish, if I may command.
For best of cheer I'll back old Fatherland.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*boring a hole in the edge of the table, where* FROSCH *is sitting*).

A little wax to stop the hole! Quick, quick!

ALTMAYER (*to* FROSCH.)

Pshaw, this is palpably a juggler's trick!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* BRANDER).

And you?

BRANDER.

Champagne, champagne for me,
Creaming and sparkling cheerily!

[MEPHISTOPHELES *bores; meanwhile one of the party has made stoppers of wax, and stopped the holes.*

BRANDER.

One can't always put foreign gear aside;
For good things we have often far to go.
French men no real German can abide,
He drinks their wines without a scruple, though.

SIEBEL (*as* MEPHISTOPHELES *approaches him*).

The sour, I own, I can't away with.
Pure sweet, I'd like a glass of that.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*bores*).

You shall, sir, have Tokay to play with.

ALTMAYER.

No, no, sir, no! I tell you what:
You're making game, you are, of us.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That were somewhat too venturous
With men of mark like you. You doubt it?
Quick! Tell me without more ado,
What wine I am to serve for you?

ALTMAYER.

Any! So that you don't stand haggling long about it!

[*After all the holes have been bored, and stoppers put into them.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*with strange gestures*).

Wine-grapes of the vine are born,
Front of he-goat sprouts with horn,
Wine is juice, and vine-stocks wood,
Wooden board yields wine as good!
Here is truth for him that sees
Into nature's mysteries;
Miracles when you receive,
You have only to believe!

Now draw your stoppers, and fall to!

ALL (*as they draw the stoppers, and the wine each has selected runs into his glass*).

Oh fountain, beautiful to view!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Be very careful! Drink your fill,
But see, that not a drop you spill!
[*They drink repeatedly.*

ALL (*sing*).

As savagely jolly are we,
As any five hundred porkers!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

These sots from all restraint are freed,
And so are blest, and blest indeed.

FAUST.

I'm sick of this, and would be gone.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Only a little moment stay;
You'll see a glorious display
Of what mere beasts they are, anon.

SIEBEL (*drinks carelessly; wine is spilt on the ground and turns into flame*).

Help! Hell's broke loose! We all are shent!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*adjuring the flame*).

Be quiet, kindly element!

[*To the topers.*

This time 'twas nothing but a tiny spark
Of purgatorial fire, not worth remark!

SIEBEL.

Just wait, and your cock's comb I'll mar.
You do not know, it strikes me, who we are.

FROSCH.

His tricks a second time just let him try.

ALTMAYER.

Let's send him to the right-about, say I.

SIEBEL.

Confound you, coming to provoke us
With playing off your hocus-pocus!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Silence, old vat!

SIEBEL.

You broomstick, you!
And so you'd fain be saucy, too?

BRANDER.

Wait, and I'll thrash you black and blue.

ALTMAYER (*draws a stopper from the table; fire shoots out towards him*).

I burn! I'm all on fire!

SIEBEL.

The wizard!
Down with him! Stick him through the gizzard!
[*They draw their knives, and make a rush at* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*with solemn gesticulations*).

Voices, that delude the ear,
Forms, that mock the eye, appear!
Let the distant seem the near,
Be ye there and be ye here!
[*They stand amazed and stare at each other.*

ALTMAYER.

Where am I? What a lovely land!

FROSCH.

Vineyards! How strange!

SIEBEL.

And grapes that court the hand!

BRANDEP.

Here, under these green leaves by me,
See, what a stem! What branches, see!
[*Seizes* SIEBEL *by the nose. The rest do the same with each other, and brandish their knives.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*as before*).

Phantoms of delusion, rise,
Lift the bandage from their eyes!
And take note, ye swinish soaks,
In what wise the devil jokes!
[*He disappears with* FAUST. *The topers recoil from one another.*

SIEBEL.

What's this?

ALTMAYER.

How's this?

FROSCH.

Was that your nose?

BRANDER (*to* SIEBEL).

On yours, too, see, my fingers close!

ALTMAYER.

It sent a shock through all my limbs!
A chair! I'm falling! My head swims!

FROSCH.

What ails you all?

SIEBEL.

Where is he? Where?
Let me but catch the knave, he dies, I swear.

ALTMAYER.

Out of the cellar-door, astride
A huge wine-tun, I saw him ride.
I feel like lead about the feet.
[*Turning towards the table.*
Zounds! Should the wine be running yet!

SIEBEL.

'Twas all a sham, a trick, a cheat!

FROSCH.

Yet, that it was wine, I would bet.

BRANDER.

But how about the grapes?

ALTMAYER.

Well, after that,
Doubt miracles who may, I won't, that's flat.

SCENE III.—WITCHES' KITCHEN.

A large caldron suspended above the fire upon a low hearth. Through the fumes that ascend from it various figures are visible. A female ape sits beside the caldron skimming it, and watching that it does not boil over. The male ape with the young ones sits near her, and warms himself. Walls and ceiling are decorated with witches' furniture of the most fantastic kind.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

I loathe this wizard rubbish. You maintain,
That in this chaos of a crazy brain
I shall my wasted strength repair?
Take counsel of an aged hag? Oh, shame!
Can the foul mess, that simmers there,
Strike thirty winters from my frame?
If you know nothing better, I despair!
Already do I feel, to hope were vain.
Hath nature, hath some soul of noble strain,
Discovered no elixir anywhere?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now with your old sagacity you speak!
There is a natural recipe for youth; but you

For that must in another volume seek,
And there it makes a striking chapter, too!

FAUST.

What is its nature? Tell me, what?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Look you! A remedy, to be got
Sans sorcery, gold, or medicine.
Hence to the fields at once! Begin
To hack and delve with might and main,
Yourself and your desires confine
Within the very narrowest line,
On simple food yourself sustain,
With beasts live as a beast, and think it not a bore,
Yourself to dung the field you are to reap.
This, trust me, is the best of ways to keep
The fire of youth within you to fourscore.

FAUST.

I am not used to toil, and 'tis too late to force
Myself to wield the spade. A life so bare,
So cramped, would drive me to despair.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then is the witch our sole resource.

FAUST.

But why this beldame? Cannot you
Without her aid the potion brew?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That were fine waste of time. Go to!
Rather would I a thousand bridges build,
Within the time 'twould take to brew it.
No matter how you may be skilled,

You must give tireless patience to it.
A quiet spirit works at it for years;
Time, only time, the fermentation clears,
And concentrates its subtle force.
All the ingredients of the stew
Are wondrous in their kind, and source.
The devil taught the witch, 'tis true,
But, make it, that he cannot do.
[*Turning to the Apes.*
A handsome brood as ever was!
This is the lad, and this the lass.
[*To the Apes.*
The dame is not at home, it seems?

THE APES.

She takes her 'rouse
Outside the house,
Up by the chimney among the beams.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And how long is she apt to stay,
When she is out for such a cause?

APES.

We just have time to warm our paws,
And nothing more, while she's away.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

How like you them, the dainty brutes?

FAUST.

Such loathsome creatures have I never seen.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nay, nay! A chat like this, I ween,
Is just the thing that best my fancy suits!
[*To the Apes.*

Tell me, ye whelps accurst, what you
Are stirring there at such a rate?

APES.

Coarse beggar's broth we boil and stew.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Your custom for it will be great.

THE HE-APE (*approaching and fawning upon* MEPHISTOPHELES).

Tarry not, but in a trice,
Shake the box, and fling the dice!
I am poor, so let me win;
Poverty is such a sin;
But, if money once I had,
Who would say, that I was mad?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How happy, now, it would the monkey make,
If in the lottery he might only stake!

[*The young Apes, who have meanwhile been playing with a large globe, roll it forwards.*

THE HE-APE.

This is the world,
Evermore twirled
Round about, round about,
Destined to bound about!
Mounting and sinking,
Like crystal clinking;
Smashing like winking
Certain to follow!
All within hollow.
Here 'tis all o'er bright,
Here even more bright!

So jolly am I!
Out of the way,
Old boy! Touch it not!
You're booked, you must die!
'Tis nothing but clay,
And that goes to pot!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

For what is the sieve here?

HE-APE (*takes it down*).

Came you to thieve here,
Straight 'twould show me why you came.
[*Runs to the She-Ape, and makes her look through it.*
Through the sieve look, look! Dost thou
Recognise the thief, and now
Art afraid to name his name?

MEPHISTOPHELES (*approaches the fire*).

And this pot?

THE APES (*Male and Female*).

The crack-brained sot,
He knows not the pot,
He knows not the kettle!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Unmannerly brute!

THE HE-APE.

Look ye now, put
This whisk in your hand, and sit down on the settle.
[*Forces* MEPHISTOPHELES *to sit down.*

FAUST (*who has, meanwhile, been standing before a mirror, now advancing towards, and now retiring from it*).

What form divine is this, that seems to live
Within the magic glass before mine eyes!
Oh love, to me thy swiftest pinion give,
And waft me to the region where she lies!
Oh, if I stir beyond this spot, and dare
Advance to scan it with a nearer gaze,
The vision fades and dies as in a haze.
A woman's form beyond expression fair!
Can woman be so fair? Or must I deem,
In this recumbent form I see revealed
The quintessence of all that heaven can yield?
On earth can aught be found of beauty so supreme?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why, when a God works hard for six whole days,
And when his task is over, says, "Bravo!"
That he should turn out something to amaze,
Is nothing more than natural, you know.
Gaze on your fill! As choice a treasure
My power for you can soon provide;
And happy he beyond all measure,
Who has the luck to bear home such a bride!

[FAUST *continues to gaze into the mirror* MEPHISTOPHELES *lounging on the settle, and playing with the whisk, continues:—*

Here like a king upon my throne I sit,
My sceptre here! My crown, though, where is it?

THE APES (*who up to this time have been indulging in all sorts of fantastic gambols, bring* MEPHISTOPHELES *a crown with loud acclamations*).

O, deign, with a flood

Of sweat and of blood,
The crown to belime!

[*They handle the crown awkwardly, and break it into two pieces, with which they dance round and round.*

'Tis done! He! He!
We speak and we see,
We hear and we rhyme.

FAUST (*before the mirror*).

Woe's me! As though I should go mad, I feel!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*pointing to the Apes*).

Why, even my head, too, begins to reel.

THE APES.

And if we make a lucky hit,
And if the words fall in and fit,
Thought's begot, and with the jingle
Seems to interweave and mingle.

FAUST (*as before*).

My breast is all on fire! Let us away!
Even now 'tis for my peace too late.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*still in the same position*).

Well, every one must own, that they
Are candid poets, at any rate.

[*The caldron, which the She-Ape has neglected in the interim, begins to boil over; a great flame shoots out and rushes up the chimney. The* WITCH *comes shooting down the chimney with a horrible shriek.*

THE WITCH.

Au! Au! Au! Au!
Confounded beast! Accursèd sow!

Neglecting the caldron and singeing your dame, you
Beast accursèd, I'll brain you, I'll lame you!
[*Espying* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.
What do I see here?
Who may you be here?
What do you seek here?
How did you sneak here?
May fire-pangs fierce
Your marrow pierce!
[*She dips the skimming ladle into the caldron, and sprinkles flames on* FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, *and the Apes. The Apes whimper.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*inverting the whisk, which he holds in his hand, and laying about with it among the glasses and pots*).
To smash! To smash,
With all your trash!
There goes your stew,
There goes your glass!
You see, we too
Our jest can pass!
You carrion, we
Can match your feat!
Good time, you see,
To your tune we beat!
[*As the* WITCH *recoils full of rage and amazement.*
Dost thou recognise me now?
Scarecrow! Atomy! Dost thou
Recognise thy lord and master?
What holds my hand, that I should not blast her?
Her and her monkey-sprites together?
Is all respect within thee dead
For me and for my doublet red?
Dost recognise not the cock's feather?

Have I so masked my face? My name
Must I on the house-tops proclaim?

THE WITCH.

Master, forgive my rough salute!
But yet I see no cloven foot:
And where may your two ravens be?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

For this time that apology
May pass; for 'tis, I can't forget,
A long while now, since last we met.
Besides, the march of intellect,
Which into shape, as time runs on,
Is licking all the world, upon
The devil's self has had effect.
The northern goblin no more shocks the sense;
Horns, tails, and claws, are things you never see;
As for the foot, with which I can't dispense,
That with society might injure me;
And therefore I for many years
Have, like young buckish cavaliers,
Among the upper circles gadded,
With calves most curiously padded.

THE WITCH (*dancing*).

I feel as if I were mad with sheer
Delight to see once more Dan Satan here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Woman, that name offends my ear!

THE WITCH.

Wherefore? What wrong has it done you?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Tut!
It has been written down, for many a day,
With other things that men call fables; but
No whit the better off for that are they.
The Wicked One they certainly ignore,
But Wicked Ones are numerous as before.
If name I must have, call me Baron! That
Will do, although the title's somewhat flat.
A squire of quite as high degree
Am I, as any squire can be.
My gentle blood you doubt not; there
Is the escutcheon that I bear.
[*Makes an obscene gesture.*

THE WITCH (*laughs immoderately*).

Ha! Ha! That's just like you! So clever!
Always the same mad wag as ever.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

Mark this, my friend! Whate'er the hitch is,
This is the way to deal with witches.

THE WITCH.

Now, gentlemen, what is't you seek?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A bumper of your famous brew
Your oldest, though, I must bespeak;
Years doubly efficacious make it.

THE WITCH.

Right gladly! Here's a flask! I take it
Myself at times in little sips;
All trace of stink has left it, too.

I'll give it cheerfully to you. [*Aside to* MEPHISTOPHELES.
But him there, if it touch his lips,
Unless he's seasoned 'gainst its power,
You know, he cannot live an hour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, he is an especial friend,
'Tis just the thing to serve his end.
The best your kitchen can produce
I do not grudge him for his use.
So draw your circle, and unroll
Your spells, and hand him out a brimming bowl!

[*The* WITCH, *with weird gestures, draws a circle, and places marvellous things within it; meanwhile the glasses begin to ring, the caldron to sound and make music. Last of all she fetches a great book, places the Apes within the circle, where she makes them serve as a reading-desk, and hold the torches. She beckons* FAUST *to approach.*

FAUST (*to* MEPHISTOPHELES).

What is all this to end in, say?
These mad paraphernalia,
These gestures and distortions frantic,
This mess of juggle and of antic,
I know them all too well of old,
And in profound aversion hold.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

All humbug! stuff to laugh at merely!
But do not take things too severely!
Being a doctor in her way,
She must some hocus-pocus play,
In order that on you her juice
May the desired effect produce.

[*He forces* FAUST *to enter the circle.*

THE WITCH (*with great emphasis declaims from her book*).

This must ye ken!
From one make ten,
Drop two, and then,
Make three square, which
Will make you rich;
Skip o'er the four!
From five and six,—
In that the trick's,—
Make seven and eight,
And all is straight;
And nine is one,
And ten is none.
This is the witch's One Time's One!

FAUST.

The beldame's babble seems as it
Were ravings of a fever fit.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, there's a deal more yet to follow,
And just as solid, and as hollow;
The whole book clinks the self-same chime.
I know it well; and much good time
Have I lost o'er it, good and serious.
For downright contradiction pulls
As hard on wise men's brains, as fools'!
And unto both remains alike mysterious.
The trick's both old and new. The way
At all times was, as 'tis to-day,
By three and one, and one and three,
To preach up lies as simple sooth,
And sow broadcast by land and sea
Delusions in the place of truth.

So men talk on the nonsense, they
Have ground into them in the schools;
And no one cares to say them nay,
For who'd perplex himself with fools?
Men, for the most part, when they hear
Words smite with vigour on their ear,
Believe that thought an entrance finds
Into the things they call their minds.

THE WITCH (*continues*).

Science is light!
But from the sight
Of all the world 'tis hidden.
Who seeks it not,
To him 'tis brought,
Unnoticed and unbidden.

FAUST.

What is this nonsense she is spouting?
My head will split anon. I seem to hear
A hundred thousand maniacs shouting
Their lunacies full chorus in mine ear.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Enough! Enough! most admirable Sybil!
Dispense thy drink, and, mind, no paltry dribble!
Fill up the cup, ay, fill it to the brim!
My friend is safe, 'twill do no harm to him.
He's taken honours 'mongst us, ay, and quaffed
Full many a deep and most potential draught.

THE WITCH (*with many ceremonies pours the drink into a goblet. As* FAUST *raises it to his lips, a film of flame shoots out from it*).

Off with it! Leave no drop above!
'Twill warm the cockles of your heart!

What! with the devil hand and glove,
And yet at flame recoil and start?
[*The* WITCH *dissolves the circle.* FAUST *steps out.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now, forth at once! To rest would mar all quite!

THE WITCH.

Your little drop will do you good, I trust.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to the* WITCH).

And, if in aught I can oblige you, just
Remind me of it on Walpurgis Night.

THE WITCH.

Here is a song! If you at times
Will sing it, you will find the rhymes
Produce upon you an effect
More singular than you expect.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

Come! Come! Be guided for your good!
'Tis indispensable you should
Perspire, that so its influence may
Through all your vitals find its way.
Hereafter I will teach you, how to prize
That prime distinction of noblesse,
Sheer lounging, listless idleness;
And soon you'll feel, with sweet surprise,
How Cupid gambols in the breast,
And flits and flutters there with exquisite unrest.

FAUST.

One glance into the mirror there!
That woman's form was all too fair!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nay, nay! Thou shalt ere long behold
The paragon of womankind,
In feature perfect, and in mould,
Warm, living, ay, and loving to your mind.
[*Aside.*
With this draught in his body, he
In every wench a Helena will see.

SCENE IV.—STREET.

FAUST, MARGARET (*passing along*).

FAUST.

My pretty lady, permit me, do,
My escort and arm to offer you!

MARGARET.

I'm neither a lady, nor pretty, and so
Can home without an escort go.
[*Breaks away from him and exit.*

FAUST.

By heaven, this girl is lovely! Ne'er
Have I seen anything so fair.
She is so pure, so void of guile,
Yet something snappish, too, the while.
Her lips' rich red, her cheeks' soft bloom,
Will haunt me to the day of doom!
The pretty way she droops her eyes
Has thrilled my heart in wondrous wise;
Her short sharp manner, half in fright

'Twas charming, fascinating quite!
(*To* MEPHISTOPHELES, *who enters.*)
Hark, you must get that girl for me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Get you that girl? Which do you mean?

FAUST.

She that went by but now.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! She?
She has to her confessor been,
Who gave her—he could scarce do less—
Full absolution; I was there,
Lying ensconced behind his chair.
Though she had nothing to confess,
Nothing whatever, to him she went,
Poor thing, she is so innocent.
Over that girl I have no power.

FAUST.

Yet is she fourteen, every hour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Spoken like Sir Rake, who would make prize
Of every dainty flower he spies,
And thinks all honours, favours, may
Be had for taking any day!
But this won't do in every case.

FAUST.

Ho, Master Graveairs, is it so?
Your sermonising's out of place.
And, in a word, I'd have you know,
Unless this very night shall see

This sweet young thing in my embrace,
All's at an end 'twixt you and me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Think of the obstacles! I should
Require at least a fortnight good,
To bring about a meeting merely.

FAUST.

In half the time I'll undertake,
Without the devil's aid, to make
A chit like that adore me dearly.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why, by your talk, now, one might swear,
That you almost a Frenchman were!
But, pray, don't lose your temper so!
For where's the good, I'd like to know
Of rushing to enjoyment straight?
The pleasure's not by much so great,
As when you've first by every kind
Of foolish fondling to your mind
The doll contrived to knead and mould,
As many Italian tales have told.

FAUST.

My appetite, I tell you, wants
No such fantastic stimulants.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That may be;—but, apart all jest,
Or slight upon you, I protest,
With this young thing you'll ne'er succeed,
By pushing on at race-horse speed.
We cannot storm the town, in short,
So must to stratagem resort.

FAUST.

Fetch me some thing she's used to wear!
Her bedroom, introduce me there!
A kerchief from her bosom bring,
The darling's garter, anything!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That you may see, I mean to spare
No pains to bring your suit to bear,
We shall not lose one moment,—nay,
We'll bring you to her room this very day.

FAUST.

And shall I see,—possess her?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No!
She will be with a neighbour. So
You may, quite undisturbed the while,
Within her atmosphere beguile
The time by dreaming, fancy free,
Of pleasures afterwards to be.

FAUST.

Can we go there at once?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh no.
'Tis much too early yet to go.

FAUST.

Provide me with some present straight,
Which may her fancy captivate! [*Exit.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Presents? Oh rare! He's sure to make a hit.
Full many a famous place I know,
And treasures buried long ago.
Well! I must look them up a bit.

END OF ACT SECOND.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Evening.

A tidily appointed little room.

Margaret (*braiding and binding up her hair*).

Who was that gentleman? Heigho!
I would give something, now, to know.
He looked so frank and handsome, he
Of noble blood must surely be.
That much, at least, his forehead told;
He ne'er had ventured else to be so bold. [*Exit.*

Mephistopheles *and* Faust *enter.*

Mephistopheles.

Come in as softly as you may!

Faust (*after a pause*).

Leave me alone—alone, I pray!

Mephistopheles (*peering about the room*).

It is not every girl keeps things so neat. [*Exit.*

Faust (*casting his eyes around*).

Welcome, thou twilight glimmer sweet,
Throughout this sanctuary shed!
Oh, love's delicious pain, that art
By dews of hope sustained and fed,

Take absolute possession of my heart!
How, all around, there breathes a sense
Of calm, of order, and content!
What plenty in this indigence!
In this low cell what ravishment!
[*Casts himself down upon a leathern arm-chair by the bedside.*
Receive me, thou, that hast with open arm
Held generations past in joy and moan!
Ah me! how often has a rosy swarm
Of children clung to this paternal throne!
Here did my love, perhaps, with grateful breast
For gifts the holy Christ-child brought her, stand,
Her chubby childish cheeks devoutly pressed
Against her aged grandsire's withered hand.
I feel thy spirit, maiden sweet,
Of order and contentment round me play,
That like a mother schools thee day by day,
Upon the table bids thee lay
The cover folded fresh and neat,
And strew the sand that crackles 'neath the feet.
Dear hand, that dost all things with beauty leaven.
Thou makest, like a god, this lowly home a heaven!
And here! [*Raises one of the curtains of the bed.*
What rapturous tremor shakes me now?
Here could I linger hours untold.
Here the incarnate angel thou,
O Nature, didst in airy visions mould;
Here lay the child, its gentle breast
Filled with warm life; and, hour by hour,
The bud, by hands divine caressed,
Expanded to the perfect flower!

And thou! What brings thee hither? I
Am stirred with strange emotion. Why?
What wouldst thou here? What weight so sore

Is this that presses on thy heart?
O hapless Faust, so changed thou art,
I know thee now no more, no more!

Is't some enchanted atmosphere,
Encompasses, and charms me here?
Upon possession's bliss supreme
My soul till now was madly bent,
And now in a delicious dream
Of love I melt away content.
Is man, with all his powers so rare,
The sport of every gust of air?

And if she were to enter now,
How would your guilty soul her glances meet?
The mighty braggart, ah, how small! would bow
Dissolved in abject terror, at her feet.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Despatch! She's coming to the door.

FAUST.

Hence! Hence! Here I return no more.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here is a casket, laden well;
I got it, where? no need to tell.
If you will only place it there
Within the press—quick, quick!—I swear,
She'll be beside herself with joy.
Some baubles there I've stowed away;
For toys we angle with a toy.
Pah! Child is child, and play is play.

FAUST.

I know not—shall I?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Can you ask it?
Perhaps you'd like to keep the casket!
In that case, friend, I would advise
Your lechery to economise
The precious hours,—give up the bubble,
And save myself all farther trouble.
You avaricious? You? Oh no!
I won't believe that this is so.
I scratch my head—toil might and main—
[*He places the casket in the press and closes the lock.*
Let us be off! Psha! lingering still?—
The sweet young thing for you to gain,
And bend her to your wish and will;
And here are you with face of gloom,
For all the world, as if you were
Just entering your lecture-room,
And saw before you Physics there,
And Metaphysics grimly stare!
Come! Start! [*Exeunt.*

MARGARET (*enters with a lamp*).

It is so close, so sultry here!
[*Opens the window.*
And yet outside 'twas rather chilly.
I feel, I can't tell how; oh dear!
I wish that mother would come in.
I have a creeping all over my skin.
I'm such a frightened thing,—so silly!
[*Begins to sing as she undresses herself.*

In Thule dwelt a King, and he
Was leal unto the grave;
A cup to him of the red red gold
His leman dying gave.

He quaffed it to the dregs, whene'er
He drank among his peers,
And ever, as he drained it down,
His eyes would brim with tears.

And when his end drew near, he told
His kingdom's cities up,
Gave all his wealth unto his heir,
But with it not the cup.

He sat and feasted at the board,
His knights around his knee,
Within the palace of his sires,
Hard by the roaring sea.

Then up he rose, that toper old,
A long last breath he drew,
And down the cup he loved so well
Into the ocean threw.

He saw it flash, then settle down,
Down, down into the sea,
And, as he gazed, his eyes grew dim,
Nor ever again drank he.

[*She opens the press to put away her clothes, and discovers the casket.*

What's here? How comes this lovely casket thus?
I'm very confident I locked the press.
'Tis surely most mysterious!
What it contains I cannot guess.
In pledge for money lent, maybe,
'Tis with my mother left to keep?
A ribbon and a little key!
I've half a mind to take a peep.
What's this? Great heavens! All my days

The like of this I've never seen,—
Jewels and trinkets! Such a blaze
Might grace a duchess, ay, a queen!
On me how would the necklace sit?
Whose can they be, these braveries fine?
[*Puts on the trinkets, and walks before the looking-glass.*
Oh, if the ear-rings were but mine!
In them one doesn't look the same a bit.
You may be young, you may be pretty;
All very nice and fine to view,
But nobody cares a straw for you,
And, if folks praise, 'tis half in pity.
For gold all strive,
For gold all wive.
'Tis gold rules all things 'neath the sun.
Alas! we poor folks that have none!

SCENE II.—Public Promenade.

Faust *walking up and down wrapt in thought. To him* Mephistopheles.

Mephistopheles.

By love despised and its tortures fell!
By all the elements of hell!
Oh, would I only knew something worse,
That I might cram it into a curse!

Faust.

What's wrong? What puts you in such case?
In all my life I ne'er saw such a face.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The devil's self if I were not,
I'd pitch myself to him on the spot!

FAUST.

What has befallen to rob you of your wits!
How well on you this maniac fury sits!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Just think—'tis not to be endured—
The set of jewels I procured
For Margaret, a rascal priest
Has swept clean off,—he has, the beast!
Her mother of them got an inkling,
And fell to quaking in a twinkling.
The nose that woman has, you'd ne'er
Believe, for scenting all that's wrong,
Over her Book of Common Prayer
She snuffles, snuffles, all day long.
With sanctimonious scowl demure,
At every stick of furniture
She drops her nose to ascertain,
If it be holy or profane.
So in the trinkets soon she spies,
That not much of a blessing lies.
Quoth she, "All such unrighteous gear
Corrupts both body and soul, my dear.
So let us, then, this devil's bait
To Mary Mother consecrate,
And she, as recompense instead,
Will gladden us with heavenly bread."
Poor Gretchen pulled a long wry face.
"Gift horse!" thought she, "in any case!
And very godless he cannot be,
Who brought it here so handsomely."

The mother for the parson sent,
Who heard her nonsense, and his eyes,
Be sure, they gleamed with a rare content,
When he beheld the glistening prize.
Quoth he, "A holy frame of mind!
Who conquers self, leaves all behind!
The church, for whom your gift is meant,
A stomach has most excellent.
Whole countries, land, and grange, and town,
She at a meal has swallowed down,
Yet ne'er, however gorged with pelf,
Was known to over-eat herself.
The church, my dears, alone with zest
Can such unrighteous gear digest."

FAUST.

That power it shares with not a few;
Your king, now, has it, eke your Jew.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

So saying, he swept off amain
Ring, necklace, bracelet, brooch, and chain,
With quite as unconcerned an air,
As if they merely mushrooms were,
Treating my precious gems and casket
Like nuts so many in a basket;
And, promising that heaven no end
Of fair rewards to them would send,
He took his leave, and there they sat,
Immensely edified by that.

FAUST.

And Gretchen?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

She is all unrest,
And scarce knows what she'd like the best,

Thinks of the trinkets night and day,
And more of them that brought them—hey!

FAUST.

It pains me, that my love should fret.
Fetch her at once another set!
The first were no great things.—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Heyday!
All things are to my lord child's play.

FAUST.

Do what I wish, and quickly! Go!
Stick to her neighbour close. Be no
Mere milk-and-water devil, and get
Of these gewgaws another set.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That you desire it is enough. [*Exit* FAUST.
Such lovesick fools away will puff
Sun, moon, and stars into the air,
And all to please their lady fair.

SCENE III.—THE NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE.

MARTHA (*alone*).

My good man, God forgive him, he
Has acted scurvily by me,
To start away, the Lord knows where,
And leave me widowed, lone, and bare.
I never plagued him—God forbid!—
I loved him dearly, that I did. [*Weeps.*

Perhaps he's dead, though? Cruel fate!
Had I but some certificate,
The fact officially to state!

Enter MARGARET.

MARGARET.

Martha!

MARTHA.

What ails my pretty dear?

MARGARET.

I feel just like to drop. See here
Another casket—nothing less—
Of ebony left in my press!
And things, so grand and fine, I feel,
They're costlier than the first a deal.

MARTHA.

You must not let your mother know,
Or to the priest they, too, will go.

MARGARET.

Oh see, now, see! Look at them, do!

MARTHA.

You lucky, lucky, creature you!

MARGARET.

Alas! I never dare appear,
In the street or at church, in such fine gear.

MARTHA.

To me come often over, lass;
You can put them on, and nobody know;
Parade a good hour before the glass,

We'll have our own enjoyment so.
And then, if you'll but wait, no doubt
You're sure somehow to get a chance,
Little by little to bring them out,
On holidays, or at a dance.
We'll manage it so as to make no stir;
A necklace first, and then the pearl
Ear-rings—your mother won't notice, girl;
We can always make out some story for her.

MARGARET.

But who could both the caskets bring?
There's something wrong about the thing.
[*A knock at the door.*
Good heavens! Should that be mother!

MARTHA.

Nay,
Some stranger 'tis—Come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*entering*).

I pray
Your pardon, ladies, for intruding thus.
'Tis most unceremonious,
[*Steps back respectfully on seeing* MARGARET.
Which may Dame Martha Schwerdtlein be?

MARTHA.

What is your pleasure? I am she.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside to her*).

Now that I know you, that will do.
You've quality, I see, with you.
Excuse the liberty I took:
In later in the day I'll look.

MARTHA (*aloud*).

Just think, the odd mistake he made! He
Fancied, child, you were a lady.

MARGARET.

A simple girl am I, and poor.
The gentleman's too kind, I'm sure.
These ornaments are not my own.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis not the ornaments alone;
The piercing glance, the air urbane-
How glad I am, I may remain!

MARTHA.

Your news, sir? I'm all ears! How went it?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I would my tale were less distressing.
On me, I trust, you won't resent it?
Your husband's dead, and sends his blessing.

MARTHA.

Is dead? Poor darling! lackaday!
My husband's dead. I faint away!

MARGARET.

Oh, keep your heart up, dearest friend!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Hear the sad story to the end!

MARGARET.

'Tis things like this, which make me pray,
That fall in love I never may;

For such a loss, I do believe,
To death itself would make me grieve.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ah, joy goes hand in hand with care.

MARTHA.

But tell me, how he died and where?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In Padua his bones repose.
There, ma'am, in Saint Antonio's,—
The best of consecrated ground,—
A quiet corner he has found.

MARTHA.

But have you nought for me beside?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, one most weighty, huge request,—
Three hundred masses to provide,
To sing his poor soul into rest.
Of all but this my pocket's bare.

MARTHA.

What! Not a luck-penny? What! Ne'er
A trinket,—token? Why, there's not
A handicraftsman but has got,
Somewhere within his wallet stored,
However bare, some little hoard,
Something to touch a body's heart with,
He'd sooner starve, or beg, than part with.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I feel for you, but let me say,
His money was not fooled away.

Besides, he did his sins deplore,
But mourned his evil luck considerably more.

MARGARET.

Alas! that men should be so wretched! He
Shall for his soul's repose have many a prayer from me.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You are so good, so charming, you
Deserve a husband, ay, and quickly too.

MARGARET.

Ah no! Too soon for that! I can't—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, till the husband comes, then, a gallant!
Heaven has no boon more sweet, more rare,
Than in one's arms to fold a thing so fair.

MARGARET.

That's not our country's usage, sir.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Usage or not, such things occur.

MARTHA.

Go on, sir!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I was at his side,
There by the bed on which he died,
A sorrier eyes never saw,
A mere dung-heap of rotten straw.
Yet still he made a Christian ending,
And found, that, what with drink and spending,
He had run up a great deal more,

Than he had thought for, on his score.
"How I detest myself!" cried he,
"For having so disgracefully
Deserted both my wife and calling.
The very thought on't is appalling!
It saps my life. Could I but know,
That she forgives me, ere I die!"

MARTHA (*weeping*).

Dear heart! I—I forgave him long ago.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

"Still, God knows, she was more to blame than I."

MARTHA.

He lied there! What! To lie, the knave,
Upon the threshold of the grave!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

His latest gasps were spent in fiction,
That is my most profound conviction.
"Small time for idling had I," he said,
"First getting children, then getting them bread,
And clothing their backs, yet never had yet
A moment's quiet to eat my crust."

MARTHA.

Did he thus all my truth, my love forget,
My drudging early and late?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Be just!
Not so. Of that in his dejection
He showed a touching recollection.
"When I," he said, "was leaving Malta, I
Prayed for my wife and children most devoutly

Heaven so far blessed my prayers, that by-and-by
We met a Turkish galley, took it stoutly.
It carried treasure for the Sultan. There
Valour for once had its reward, 'tis true,
And I received—and 'twas my simple due—
Of what we took a very handsome share."

MARTHA.

What? How? He hid it somewhere, I suppose?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Where the four winds have blown it now, who knows?
Strolling forlorn in Naples through the city,
A damsel on his loneliness took pity,
And such warm tenderness between them passed,
He bore its marks, poor saint, about him to the last.

MARTHA.

Wretch! To his children play the thief?
Not all his want, not all his grief
Could check his shameless life.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ay, ma'am, but surely,
'Twas this that killed him prematurely.
Now, were I in your place, I would
Mourn one chaste year of widowhood;
And look about meanwhile to find
A second husband to my mind.

MARTHA.

Ah me! With all his faults I durst
Not hope to find one like the first.
A kinder-hearted fool than he
'Twas scarcely possible to be.
His only fault was, that from home

He was too much inclined to roam,
Loved foreign women—filthy vice!—
And foreign wine, and those curst dice.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How different might have been his state,
Had he, poor wretch, been equally
Forbearing and affectionate!
Treat me as well, and, I protest,
I'd ask you to change rings with me.

MARTHA.

O Lord, sir, you are pleased to jest!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

I'd best be off now! This absurd
Old fool would take the devil at his word.
[*To* MARGARET.
How is it with your heart?—Content?

MARGARET.

What mean you, sir?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sweet innocent!
(*Aloud.*) Ladies, farewell!

MARGARET.

Farewell!

MARTHA.

Before
You go, sir, give me one word more.
I'd like to have some proof to show
Where, how, and when my darling died,
And was interred. I've always tried

To be methodical, and so
'Twould comfort me, it would indeed,
Could I his death but in the papers read.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, certainly, good madam, I
Your wish at once can gratify.
One witness by another backed,
All the world over, proves a fact.
I have a friend in town here, who will state
What you require before the Magistrate.
I'll bring him here with me.

MARTHA.

Oh do, sir, pray!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And this young lady will be with you, eh?
A fine young fellow! A great traveller! Quite
A ladies' man,—especially polite.

MARGARET.

I'd sink with shame before him, sir.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No! Not before an emperor.

MARTHA.

At dusk in my back garden we
You and your friend will hope to see.

SCENE IV.—Street.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

What speed? Will't work? What of my dear?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Bravo! So hot? You'll shortly bring
Your quarry down. This evening
At neighbour Martha's shall you see her!
That is a woman made express
To play the pimp and procuress.

FAUST.

Good! Good!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But there is something, too,
That she requires of us to do.

FAUST.

Well, one good turn deserves another.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We
Have to depone—a mere formality—
That stiff and stark her husband's carcass lies
In Padua in holy ground.

FAUST.

Most wise!
Why, we must make the journey first, of course?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sancta simplicitas! No need of that! You just
Speak to the facts, and take them upon trust.

FAUST.

The game is up, if that's the sole resource.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O holy man! is this your cue?
Is this the first time in your life, that you
Have borne false witness? Have you not
In language the most positive defined
God, the world, all that moves therein, mankind,
His capabilities of feeling, thought,
Ay, done it with a breast undashed
By faintest fear, a forehead unabashed?
Yet tax yourself, and you must own, that you
As much in truth about these matters knew,
As of Herr Schwerdtlein's death you do.

FAUST.

Liar and sophist, thou wilt be
Liar and sophist to the close!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, certainly, could one not see
A little farther before one's nose.
To-morrow will not you—of course,
In all integrity!—beguile
Poor Margaret, and your suit enforce,
By swearing all your soul hangs on her smile?

FAUST.

And from my heart I'd speak.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O specious art!
You'll talk about eternal truth and love,
Of passion, all control, all change above;
Will this, too, come quite purely from the heart?

FAUST.

Peace, fiend! it will! What! If I feel,
And for that feeling, frenzy, flame,
I seek, but cannot find a name,
Then through the round of nature reel,
With every sense at fever heat,
Snatching at all sublimest phrases,
And call this fire, that in me blazes,
Endless, eternal, ay, eternal,—
Is this mere devilish deceit,
Devised to dazzle, and to cheat?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yet am I right.

FAUST.

Thou fiend infernal!
Hear me! And mark, too, what I say,
So spare these lungs of mine, I pray.
He that's resolved he's in the right,
And has but tongue enough, is quite
Secure to gain his point. But come,
This babblement grows wearisome.
Right, then, thou art. I grant it, just
Because I cannot choose but must.

SCENE V.—Garden.

Margaret *on* Faust's *arm.* Martha *with* Mephistopheles *walking up and down.*

Margaret.

You only bear with me, I'm sure you do,
You stoop, to shame me, you so wise.
You travellers are so used to view
All things you come across with kindly eyes.
I know, my poor talk can but weary such
A man as you, that must have known so much.

Faust.

One glance, one word of thine, to me is more
Than all this world's best wisdom—all its lore.
[*Kisses her hand.*

Margaret.

Oh no, sir, no! How can you kiss it? 'Tis
So coarse, so hard—it is not fit—
The things I've had to do with it!
Mother's too niggardly—indeed she is.
[*They pass on.*

Martha.

And you, like this, are always travelling, sir?

Mephistopheles.

Business, alas! and duty force us. Ah! what pain
It costs a man from many a place to stir,
Where yet his fate forbids him to remain!

MARTHA.

'Tis very well to rove this way
About the world when young, and strong, and brave.
But soon or later comes the evil day;
And to go crawling on into the grave
A stiff old lonely bachelor,—that can
Never be good for any man.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I shudder, thinking such may be my fate.

MARTHA.

Then, sir, be wise, before it is too late.

[*They pass on.*

MARGARET.

Yes! Out of sight is out of mind!
Politeness costs you nothing. Why,
You've friends in plenty, good and kind,
And they have far more sense than I.

FAUST.

Oh, best of creatures, trust me, the pretence
Of that, which passes with the world for sense,
More frequently is neither more nor less,
Than self-conceit and narrow-mindedness.

MARGARET.

How so?

FAUST.

Ah! That simplicity
And innocence will never recognise
Themselves, and all their worth so holy!
That meekness and a spirit lowly,

The highest gifts, that Nature's free
And loving bounty can devise—

MARGARET.

A little moment only think of me;
I shall have time enough to think of you.

FAUST.

You're much alone, then?

MARGARET.

Yes! 'Tis true,
Our household's small, but still, you see,
It wants no little looking to.
We have no maid; so I've to do
The cooking, sewing, knitting, sweeping;
I'm on my feet from morn till night,
And mother's so exacting, and so tight
In her housekeeping.
Not that she needs to pinch so close. We might
Much more at ease than other people be.
My father left us, when he died,
A cottage with some garden ground, outside
The town, a tidy bit of property.
But now I am not near so sore bestead.
My brother is away—a soldier he.
My little sister's dead.
Ah! with the child I had a world of trouble.
And yet, and yet, I'd gladly undergo
It all again, though it were double,
I loved the darling so.

FAUST.

An angel, sweet, if it resembled you!

MARGARET.

I brought it up, and, do you know,
It loved me with a love so true!
My father died, before 'twas born.
We gave up mother for lost; her fit
Left her so wasted, and so forlorn,
And very, very slow she mended, bit by bit.
She could not, therefore, dream herself
Of suckling the poor little elf;
And so I nursed it all alone,
On milk and water, till at last
It grew my very own.
Upon my arm, within my breast
It smiled, and crowed, and grew so fast.

FAUST.

You must have felt most purely blest.

MARGARET.

Oh yes! Still I had many things to try me.
The baby's cradle stood at night
Beside my bed: if it but stirred, I would
Awake in fright.
One time I had to give it drink or food,
Another time to lay it by me;
Then, if it had a crying fit,
Out of my bed I needs must get,
And up and down the room go dandling it;
And yet
Be standing at the wash-tub by daybreak,
Then do the marketing, set the house to rights:
And so it went on, mornings, mid-days, nights,
Always the same! Such things will make
One's spirits not at all times of the best,
Still they give relish to our food, our rest.

[*They pass on.*

MARTHA.

Poor women get the worst on't, though. A dry
Old bachelor's not easy to convert.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Would one like you but make the trial, I
My wicked ways might soon desert.

MARTHA.

Frankly, now! Is there no one you have met?
Has not your heart formed some attachment yet?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What says the proverb? A hearth of one's own.
And a housewife good, it is well known,
Are better than gold or precious stone.

MARTHA.

I mean, sir, have you never had a liking?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The favour shown me everywhere is striking.

MARTHA.

I wished to say; your heart, has it
Never been conscious of a serious feeling?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Madam, a jesting mood were most unfit,
Not to say, dangerous, when with ladies dealing.

MARTHA.

Ah, you don't understand what I'd be at.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'm grieved most heartily for that.
But this is quite clear to my mind,
That you are very, very kind. [*They pass on.*

FAUST.

When I came in, you little angel, then,
You knew me at a glance again?

MARGARET.

Did you not see? I could not meet your look.

FAUST.

And you forgive the liberty I took,
The mad impertinence, which prompted me,
To stop you on the street the other day,
As you came out from the Cathedral door?

MARGARET.

It took me quite aback. What could it be?
Nothing like this had e'er occurred before.
No one of me an evil word could say.
And then it crossed my thoughts; "Alas, the day!
Can he about me anything have seen,
Bold or unmaidenly in look or mien?"
It seemed as if the thought had struck you—She
Is just the girl, with whom one can make free!
Let me confess the truth! Not then I knew,
What in your favour here began to stir;
But with myself I was right angry, sir,
That I could not be angrier with you.

FAUST.

Sweet love!

MARGARET.

Stay!

[*She plucks a star-flower, and picks off the petals, one after the other.*

FAUST.

What is this? A nosegay?

MARGARET.

No!

Only a game.

FAUST.

A game?

MARGARET.

You'll mock me—Go!

FAUST.

What is it thou art murmuring? What?

MARGARET.

He loves me, loves me not.

FAUST.

I guess.

Angelic creature!

MARGARET.

Loves me not,
Loves me—not—he loves me!

FAUST.

Yes!
Let what this flower has told thee be
A revelation as from heaven to thee!
Speak to me, dearest! Dost thou comprehend
All that these simple words portend?
He loves me! [*Seizes both her hands.*

MARGARET.

I am all a-tremble!

FAUST.

Oh, do not tremble! Let this look,
This pressure of the hand, proclaim to thee

What words can never speak; what bids us now
Surrender soul and sense, to feel
A rapture which must be eternal?
Eternal, for its end would be despair!
No, no, no end! No end!

[MARGARET *presses his hands, breaks from him, and runs off. He stands for a moment in thought, then follows her.*

MARTHA (*advancing*).

'Tis growing dark!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, and we must away.

MARTHA.

I'd ask you, longer here to stay
Were this not such a wicked place.
Folks seem to have nought else to do, I vow,
Or think about, except to play
The spy upon their neighbours—how
They rise, lie down, come in, go out;
And, take what heed one may, in any case
One's certain to get talked about.
But our young couple?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

They have flown
Up yonder walk. The giddy butterflies!

MARTHA.

Quite fond of her, methinks, he's grown.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And she of him. Could it be otherwise?

SCENE VI.—A Summer-house.

MARGARET *runs in, places herself behind the door, holds the tip of her finger to her lips, and peeps through the crevice.*

MARGARET.

He's coming!

FAUST.

Did you fancy, you
Could give me so the slip? Ah then,
I've caught you, rogue! [*Kisses her.*

MARGARET (*embracing him and returning the kiss*).

Oh, best of men,
I love thee, from my heart I do.
[MEPHISTOPHELES *knocks.*

FAUST (*stamping his foot*).

Who's there?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Your friend!

FAUST.

Beast, beast!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis time to go.

MARTHA (*comes up*).

Yes, sir, 'tis late.

FAUST.

Mayn't I éscort you?

MARGARET.

No!

My mother would—Farewell!

FAUST.

Must I begone?

Farewell!

MARTHA.

Adieu!

FAUST.

To meet again anon!

[*Exeunt* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MARGARET.

Dear God! The things of every kind
A man like this has in his mind!
I stand before him dashed and shy,
And say to all he speaks of, yes.
In such a simple child as I,
What he should see, I cannot guess.

SCENE VII.—FOREST AND CAVERN.

FAUST (*alone*).

Majestic spirit, thou hast given me all,
For which I prayed. Thou not in vain didst turn
Thy countenance to me in fire and flame.

Thou glorious Nature for my realm hast given.
With power to feel, and to enjoy her. Thou
No mere cold glance of wonder hast vouchsafed,
But lett'st me peer deep down into her breast,
Even as into the bosom of a friend.
Before me thou in long procession lead'st
All things that live, and teachest me to know
My kindred in still grove, in air, and stream.
And, when the storm sweeps roaring through the woods,
Upwrenching by the roots the giant pines,
Whose neighbouring trunks, and intertangled boughs,
In crashing ruin tear each other down,
And shake with roar of thunder all the hills,
Then dost thou guide me to some sheltering cave,
There show'st me to myself, and mine own soul
Teems marvels forth I weened not of before.
And when the pure moon, with her mellowing light,
Mounts as I gaze, then from the rocky walls,
And out from the dank underwood, ascend
Forms silvery-clad of ages long ago,
And soften the austere delight of thought.

Oh, now I feel, no perfect boon is e'er
Achieved by man. With this ecstatic power,
Which brings me hourly nearer to the gods,
A yokemate thou hast given me, whom even now
I can no more dispense with, though his cold
Insulting scorn degrades me to myself,
And turns thy gifts to nothing with a breath.
Within my breast he fans unceasingly
A raging fire for that bewitching form.
So to fruition from desire I reel,
And 'midst fruition languish for desire.

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! Not yet weary of this life of quiet?
How can it charm you such a while? Pooh, pooh!
'Tis very well once in a way to try it;
And then away again to something new!

FAUST.

Would thou hadst something else to do,
Than tease me when I would be still!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, I will leave you, if you will,
And leave you very gladly, too.
No need to be so very cross.
A surly peevish mate like you
Is truly little of a loss.
My hands are full from morn till night,
And yet by look or sign you won't
Let me divine what's wrong or right,
What things you like, and what you don't.

FAUST.

The true tone hit exactly! He
Wants to be thanked for boring me.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why, without me, poor son of clay,
What sort of life would you have led?
I've cured that brain of yours, this many a day,
Of the whim-whams your sickly fancy bred;
And from this ball of earth you clean away
Had, but for me, long long ago been sped.
Is it for you, to mope and scowl
In clefts and caverns, like an owl?
Or, like a toad, lap nourishment

From oozy moss, and dripping stones?
Oh, pastime rare and excellent!
The Doctor still sticks in your bones.

FAUST.

Dost comprehend, what stores of fresh life-force
I gain in roaming thus by wold and waste?
Ay, couldst thou but divine it, thou, of course,
Art too much fiend, such bliss to let me taste.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A super-earthly ecstasy! To camp
On mountains in the dark, and dews, and damp!
In transports to embrace the earth and sky,
Yourself into a deity inflate,
Pierce the earth's marrow by the light of high,
Unreasoning, presentiments innate,
Feel in your breast the whole six days' creation,
And, in the pride of conscious power, to glow
With quite incomprehensible elation,
Anon with lover's raptures to o'erflow
Into the Universal All, with now
No vestige left to mark the child of clay,
This trance ecstatic, glorious in its way,
All winding up at last— [*With a gesture.*
I shan't say how!

FAUST.

Shame on thee!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, that shocks you! You have so
Much right with moral horror to cry shame!
One must not dare to squeamish ears to name
What, natheless, squeamish hearts will not forego.
Well, well, I grudge you not the satisfaction

Of lying to yourself upon occasion :
That sort of thing soon loses its attraction ;
You'll tire of it, and without my persuasion.
To your old whims you're falling back again,
And 'tis most certain, if I let you,
They'll into madness lash your brain,
Or into horrors and blue-devils fret you.
Enough of this ! At home your darling sits,
And all with her's vacuity and sadness.
She cannot get you from her mind. Her wit's
Bewitched ; she dotes on you to madness.
At first your passion, like a little brook,
Swollen by the melted snows, all barriers overbore ;
Into her heart you've poured it all, and, look !
That little brook of yours is dry once more.
Methinks, instead of playing king
Among the woods, your lordship might
Be doing better to requite
The poor young monkey's hankering.
Time drags with her so sadly ; she, poor wight,
Stands at her window, marks with listless eye
The clouds o'er the old city walls go sweeping by.
"Oh, if a birdie I might be !" So runs her song
Half through the night, and all day long ;
One while she's gay, though mostly she's downcast,
At other times she's pumped quite dry of tears,
Then to appearance calm again, but first and last
In love o'er head and ears.

FAUST.

Serpent ! Serpent !

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

Oh, I bear you !
So that only I ensnare you !

FAUST.

Out of my sight! Accursèd thing!
Dare not to name her! Nor before
My half-distracted senses bring
Desire for her sweet body more!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What's to be done? She thinks you gone for ever!
And in a manner so you are.

FAUST.

I'm near her, ay, but were I ne'er so far,
I never can forget, can lose her never.
I envy even the Host itself, whene'er
'Tis touched by those sweet lips of hers!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Indeed!
Well, friend, I've often envied you the pair
Of dainty twins, that 'midst the roses feed.

FAUST.

Hence, pimp!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, rare! You rail, and I must laugh.
The God, who fashioned lad and wench.
Knew what He meant too well by half,
His noble purpose not to clench,
By fashioning occasion due
For bringing them together, too.
Away! 'Tis such a cruel case!
'Tis to your mistress' chamber, man, you go,
And not, methinks to your undoing.

FAUST.

What were heaven's bliss itself in her embrace?
Though on her bosom I should glow,
Must I not feel her pangs, her ruin?
What am I but an outcast, without home,
Or human tie, or aim, or resting-place,
That like a torrent raved along in foam,
From rock to rock, with ravening fury wild,
On to the brink of the abyss? And she,
In unsuspecting innocence a child,
Hard by that torrent's banks, in tiny cot,
Upon her little patch of mountain lea,
With all her homely joys and cares, begot
And bounded in that little world!
And I, the abhorred of God,—'twas not
Enough, that down with me I whirled
The rifted rocks, and shattered them! I must
Drag her, her, and her peace into the dust!
Thou, Hell, must have this sacrifice perforce!
Help, devil, then to abridge my torturing throes.
Let that which must be swiftly take its course,
Bring her doom down on me, to crown my woes,
And o'er us both one whelming ruin close!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ho, up at boiling-point again!
Get in, fool, and console her! When
Such silly pates no outlet can descry,
They think the very crash of doom is nigh.
Give me the man, that on will go,
Not to be swayed or shaken from his level!
And yet at other times you show
A tolerable spice, too, of the devil.
Go to! The devil that despairs I deem
Of all poor creatures poor in the extreme.

SCENE VIII.—Margaret's Room.

Margaret (*at her spinning-wheel alone*).

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore;
'Tis gone for ever
And evermore.

Where he is not,
Is the grave to me,
The whole world's changed,
Ah, bitterly.

I sit and I ponder
One only thought,
My senses wander,
My brain's distraught.

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore;
'Tis gone for ever
And evermore.

From my window to greet him
I gaze all day,
I stir out, if meet him
I only may.

His noble form,
His bearing high,
His mouth's sweet smile,
His mastering eye;

And the magic flow
Of his talk, the bliss

In the clasp of his hand,
And oh! his kiss!

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore;
'Tis gone for ever
And evermore.

For him doth my bosom
Cry out and pine;
Oh, if I might clasp him,
And keep him mine!

And kiss him, kiss him,
As fain would I,
I'd faint on his kisses,
Yes, faint and die!

SCENE IX.—Martha's Garden.

Margaret, Faust.

Margaret.

Promise me, Henry!

Faust.

What I can, I will.

Margaret.

How do you stand about religion, say?
You are a thoroughly good man, but still
I fear, you don't think much about it any way.

FAUST.

Hush, hush, my child! You feel I love you,—good!
For those I love could lay down life, and would.
No man would I of creed or church bereave.

MARGARET.

That is not right; we must ourselves believe.

FAUST.

Must we?

MARGARET.

Ah! could I but persuade you, dear!
You do not even the sacraments revere.

FAUST.

Revere I do.

MARGARET.

But seek them not, alas!
For long you've never gone to shrift or mass.
Do you believe in God?

FAUST.

Love, who dare say,
I do believe in God? You may
Ask priest or sage, and their reply
Will only seem to mystify,
And mock you.

MARGARET.

Then you don't believe?

FAUST.

My meaning, darling, do not misconceive.
Him who dare name?

Or who proclaim,
Him I believe?
Who feel,
Yet steel
Himself to say; Him I do not believe?
The All-Embracer,
The All-Sustainer,
Embraces and sustains He not
Thee, me, Himself?
Rears not the heaven its arch above?
Doth not the firm-set earth beneath us lie?
And with the tender gaze of love
Climb not the everlasting stars on high?
Do I not gaze upon thee, eye to eye?
And all the world of sight and sense and sound,
Bears it not in upon thy heart and brain,
And mystically weave around
Thy being influences that never wane?
Fill thy heart thence even unto overflowing,
And when with thrill ecstatic thou art glowing,
Then call it whatsoe'er thou wilt,
Bliss! Heart! Love! God!
Name for it have I none!
Feeling is all in all;
Name is but sound and smoke,
Shrouding heaven's golden glow!

MARGARET.

All this is beautiful and good; just so
The priest, too, speaks to us at times,
In words, though, somewhat different.

FAUST.

So speak the hearts of all men in all climes,
O'er which the blessèd sky is bent,
On which the blessèd light of heaven doth shine,

Each in a language that is his;
Then why not I in mine?

MARGARET.

To hear you speak, it looks not much amiss,
But still there's something, love, about it wrong:
For Christian you are not, I see.

FAUST.

Dear child!

MARGARET.

My heart has ached for long,
To see you in such company.

FAUST.

How so?

MARGARET.

The man, that is your mate,
Wakes in my inmost soul the deepest hate.
In all my life not anything
Has given my heart so sharp a sting,
As that man's loathsome visage grim.

FAUST.

Nay, dearest, have no fear of him.

MARGARET.

His presence makes my blood congeal.
Kindly to all men else I feel;
But howsoe'er for you I long,
From that man with strange dread I shrink;
That he's a knave I needs must think.
God pardon me, if I do him wrong!

FAUST.

Such odd fish there must always be.

MARGARET.

I would not live with such as he.
Whenever he comes, he's sure to peer
In at the door with such a sneer,
Half angry-like with me.
That he in no one thing takes part, is clear;
On his brow 'tis written, as on a scroll,
That he can love no human soul.
I feel so happy within thy arms,
So free, so glowing, so fearless of harms,
But in his presence my heart shuts to.

FAUST.

You sweet, foreboding angel, you!

MARGARET.

It masters me in such a way,
I even think, when he comes near,
That I no longer love you, dear.
If he were by, I never could pray,
And that eats into my heart; you, too,
Must feel, my Henry, as I do.

FAUST.

'Tis mere antipathy you bear.

MARGARET.

Now I must go.

FAUST.

Oh, can I ne'er
Hang one short hour in quiet on thy breast,
Bosom by bosom, soul in soul caressed?

MARGARET.

Ah, if I only slept alone! To-night
I'd leave the door upon the latch, I would.
But mother sleeps so very light,
And, were we caught by her, I should
Drop dead upon the spot, I vow.

FAUST.

She need not know, thou angel, thou!
Here is a phial! Let her but take
Three drops of this, and it will steep
Nature in deep and pleasing sleep.

MARGARET.

What would I not do for thy sake?
Thou'rt sure, it will not do her harm?

FAUST.

Would I advise it, else?

MARGARET.

There's some strange charm,
When I but look on you, that still
Constrains me, love, to do your will.
I have already done so much for you,
That scarce aught else is left for me to do. [*Exit.*

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The silly ape! Is't gone?

FAUST.

So, then,
Thou hast been playing spy again?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I heard distinctly all that passed.
You had, Sir Doctor, first and last,
A stiffish dose of catechising.
I'm sure, I hope 'twill do you good!
It certainly is not surprising,
These silly-pated wenches should
Be always anxious to discover,
If in his prayers and pace their lover
Jogs on the good old humdrum way.
"If pliable in that," think they,
"Us too he'll placidly obey."

FAUST.

Thou monster, thou dost not perceive,
How such a loving faithful soul,
Full of her faith, which is
To her the one sole pledge of endless bliss,
Is racked by pious anguish, to believe
Him that she dotes on doomed to everlasting dole.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou supersensual sensualist, a flirt,
A doll, a dowdy, leads thee by the nose.

FAUST.

Thou vile abortion thou of fire and dirt!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What skill in physiognomy she shows!
She turns she can't tell how, when I am present;
This little mask of mine, it seems, reveals
Meanings concealed, but certainly unpleasant;
That I'm a genius, past mistake she feels;

The devil's self, perhaps, for aught she knows.
Well, well, to-night!

FAUST.

What's that to you?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oho! In that I have my pleasure, too.

END OF ACT THIRD.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—At the Well.

Margaret *and* Bessy *with pitchers.*

Bessy.

What! Barbara? Not heard the news of her?

Margaret.

Not I. Across the door I rarely stir.

Bessy.

Oh, never doubt it!
To-day Sibylla told me all about it!
She's made a rare fool of herself at last.
This comes of her fine airs and flighty jinks!

Margaret.

How so?

Bessy.

It won't keep down. That's long, long past.
She feeds for two now, when she eats and drinks.

Margaret.

Alas!

Bessy.

She's rightly served, the jade!
For all the fuss she with the fellow made!

Such gadding here, such gadding there,
At village wake, at dance, and fair;
Must be first fiddle, too, everywhere;
He was treating her always with tarts and wine.
Set up for a beauty, she did, so fine,
And yet was so mean, and so lost to shame,
She took his presents, though, all the same.
And then the hugging, and the kissing!
So the upshot is, her rose is missing.

MARGARET.

Poor thing!

BESSY.

What! Pity her, and her sinning!
When any of us was at the spinning,
Mother kept us indoors after dark.
But she was so sweet upon her spark,
On the bench by the door, and in the dark walk,
No hour was too long for their toying and talk.
So her fine fal-lals now my lady may dock,
And do penance at church in the sinner's smock.

MARGARET.

But he will make her his wife, of course!

BESSY.

A fool if he did! A lad of mettle
Can have lots of choice, or ever he settle.
Besides, he's off.

MARGARET.

How could he do it?

BESSY.

If she should get him, she's sure to rue it.

The boys will tear her garland, and we
Strew chopped straw at her door, you'll see. [*Exit.*

MARGARET (*going home*).

What railing once rose to my lip,
If any poor girl made a slip!
My tongue hard words could scarcely frame
Enough to brand another's shame.
It looked so black, that blacken it
Howe'er I might, they seemed unfit
To stamp its blackness infinite.
I blessed myself and my nose up tossed,
And now I, too, in sin am lost.
And yet,—and yet—alas! the cause,
God knows, so good, so dear, it was!

SCENE II.—ZWINGER.

In the niche of the wall a devotional image of the Mater Dolorosa, *and in front of it pots of flowers.*

MARGARET (*placing fresh flowers in the pots*).

Oh thou, the sorest
Pangs that borest,
On mine look down with face benign!

With anguish eyeing
Thy dear Son dying,
The sword that pierced His heart in thine,

Thou to the Father gazest,
And sighs upraisest,
For His and for thy mortal pine.

Oh, who can feel, as thou,
Thy agony, that now
Tears me and wears me to the bone!
How this poor heart is choked with tears,
All that it yearns for, all it fears,
Thou knowest, thou, and thou alone!

Still wheresoe'er I go,
What woe, what woe, what woe
Is in my bosom aching!
When to my room I creep,
I weep, I weep, I weep;
My heart is breaking.

The bow-pots at my window
I with my tears bedewed,
When over them at morn, to pluck
These flowers for thee, I stood.

Brightly into my chamber shone
The sun, when dawn grew red;
Already there, all woebegone,
I sat upon my bed.

Help, sufferer divine!
Save me, oh save
From shame and from the grave!
And thou, the sorest
Pangs that borest,
On mine look down with countenance benign!

SCENE III.—Night.

Street in front of Margaret's *door.*

Valentine.

At drinking-bouts, when tongues will wag,
And many are given to boast and brag,
When praises of their own pet dears
Were dinned by comrades in my ears,
And drowned in bumpers, I was able,
My elbow planted on the table,
To bide my time, and calmly stayed,
Listening to all their gasconade.
Then with a smile my beard I'd stroke,
And take a full glass in my hand;
"Each to his fancy!" up I spoke,
"But who is there in all the land,
To match with my dear Gretel,—who
Is fit to tie my sister's shoe?"
All round the room there went a hum,
Hob, nob! Kling! Klang! "He's right!" they cried,
"Of her whole sex she is the pride."
Then all the boasters, they sat dumb.
And now—oh, I could tear my hair,
And dash my brains out in despair!—
Now every knave will think, he's free
To have his gibe and sneer at me!
And, like a bankrupt debtor, I
At each chance word must sit and fry.
Smash them all up I might: what though?
I could not call them liars,—no!

What's here? Ha! skulking out of view?
If I mistake not, there are two.

If it be he, at him I'll drive;
He shall not quit this spot alive!

Enter FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

How from the window of yon sacristy
The little lamp's undying flame doth glimmer,
While at the sides it flickers dim and dimmer,
And thicks the darkness round! Ah me!
Such midnight is it in my breast.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And I feel like a tom-cat, love distressed,
That up fire-ladders slily crawls,
And steals on tiptoe round the walls;
I burn with quite a virtuous glow,
Half thievish joy, half concupiscence, so
Does the superb Walpurgis Night
Already thrill me with delight.
Just one night more, 'tis here, and then
One gets some real fun again.

FAUST.

Look! What is that is glimmering there?
The treasure rising to the upper air?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou shalt ere long the pleasure test
Of digging up the little chest.
I took a squint at it to-night.
Such lion-dollars broad and bright!

FAUST.

How! Not a trinket? Not a ring,
To deck her out, my love, my sweet?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I think I saw with them a string
Of pearls, or something just as neat.

FAUST.

'Tis well! It vexes me to go
To her without some gift to show.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis not a thing to feel dismay for,
To have some pleasure you don't pay for!
Now heaven with stars is all aglow.
A genuine tidbit you shall hear;
A moral song I'll sing her, so
More thoroughly to befool the dear.

(*Sings to the lute.*)

Katrina, say,
What makes you stay,
Ere dawn of day,
Before your sweetheart's door so?
Away, away!
The springald gay
Lets in a May,
Goes out a May no more so!

Walk still upright!
If once you're light,
Why then, Good-night!
Poor things, 'twill ill bestead you.
Refrain, refrain!
Let no false swain
Your jewel gain,
Till with the ring he wed you!

VALENTINE (*coming forward*).

For whom are you caterwauling? Curst
Ratcatcher you! Out, trusty whinger!
To the devil with the jingler first,
Then packing after it send the singer!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The lute is cracked! 'Tis ruined for the nonce.

VALENTINE.

Have at you! Now to crack your sconce!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

Tackle him, doctor! Courage, hey!
Stick close, and, as I bid you, do.
Out with your duster! Thrust away!
I'll do the parrying for you.

VALENTINE.

Then parry that!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And wherefore not?

VALENTINE.

That too!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Just so.

VALENTINE.

I'd swear the devil fought!
What say you, then, to that? My hand's benumbed.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

Thrust home!

VALENTINE.

Oh, oh!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The bumpkin has succumbed.
Let us be off! We must evaporate!.
The hue and cry is up! Hark! What a clatter!
With the police I might make things all straight,
But with the courts 'tis quite another matter!

[*Exeunt.*

MARTHA (*at window*).

Help! Murder!

MARGARET (*at window*).

Help! A light! A light!

MARTHA (*as before*).

They brawl and scuffle, shout and fight.

PEOPLE.

Here's one of them already dead.

MARTHA (*coming out*).

The murdering villains! Have they fled?

MARGARET (*coming out*).

Who's this, lies here?

PEOPLE.

Your mother's son.

MARGARET.

Almighty God! I am undone.

VALENTINE.

I'm dying! Sooner done, than said.
Why, women, why do ye
Stand howling, whimpering there? I'm sped!
Come close, and list to me!
[*All come round him.*
Look, Gretchen! You're but young,—by far
Too shy and simple yet! You are
A bungler in your trade.
Soft in your ear a friendly hint!
You are a whore; so never stint,
But be right out a jade.

MARGARET.

Brother! Great God! What mean you?

VALENTINE.

Shame!
Out of your antics leave God's name!
What's done, alas the day! is done,
And you must run the course of sin.
You on the sly begin with one,
But several soon come trooping in,
And, once you to a dozen fall so,
Soon all the town will have you also!

When shame is born, she's to the light
Brought stealthily 'mid grief and fears,
And she is in the veil of night
Wrapped over head and ears.
Yea, folks would kill her an' they might,
But grown, as grow she will apace,
She flaunts it in the broad daylight,
And yet she wears no fairer face.
Nay, it grows uglier every way,
The more she seeks the light of day.

I see the time—'tis coming—when
Each honest-hearted citizen,
As from a plague-infected corpse,
Will turn aside from thee, thou whore!
Thy heart will fail thee with remorse,
When people look thee in the face.
No more thou'lt wear a golden chain;
Nor stand in church by the altar floor,
Nor in a collar of dainty lace
Shine foremost at the dance again.
In some dark wretched nook thou'lt hide,
With cripples and beggars and nought beside;
And even though God forgiveness grant thee,
My curse upon the earth will haunt thee!

MARTHA.

Commend your soul to God! Would you
Lay on it the sin of slander, too?

VALENTINE.

Thou shameless bawd, could I but smite
Thy wizened carcase, then I might
For all my sins of every kind
Full absolution hope to find.

MARGARET.

Oh brother! Rack me not, oh, pray!

VALENTINE.

Have done with tears! Have done, I say!
To honour when you bade farewell,
You dealt my heart its heaviest blow.
Now like a soldier, stout and fell,
Through Death's long sleep to God I go.

SCENE IV.—Cathedral.

Service, Organ and Anthem.

Margaret *amongst a number of people.*
Evil Spirit *behind her.*

Evil Spirit.

How different, Margaret, was't with thee,
When thou, still, still all innocence,
Camest to the altar here,
And from the well-thumbed little book
Didst prattle prayers, that were
Half childish playfulness,
Half God within the heart,
Margaret!
How is it with thy head?
Within thy heart
What guiltiness?
Art praying for thy mother's soul, that slept
Away to long, long agonies through thee?
Upon thy threshold whose the blood?—
And 'neath thy heart stirs not
What now is quickening there,
And with its boding presence racks
Itself and thee?

Margaret.

Woe! Woe!
Oh could I rid me of the thoughts,
That, spite of me,
Come rushing o'er my brain!

CHOIR.

Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvet sæclum in favilla! [*Organ plays.*

EVIL SPIRIT.

Horror lays hold on thee!
The judgment-trumpet sounds!
The graves rock to and fro!
And thy heart, from
Its ashy rest
Incorporate anew
For fiery pangs,
Shudders into life!

MARGARET.

Would I were out of this!
I feel as though
The organ choked my breath,
As though the anthem drew
The life-blood from my heart!

CHOIR.

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet adparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.

MARGARET.

It feels so close!
The pillars of the wall
Press in upon me,
The arches of the roof
They weigh me down!—Air!

EVIL SPIRIT.

Hide thyself! Sin and shame
Will not be hidden.—

Air? Light?
Woe to thee!

CHOIR.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem patronum rogaturus?
Cum vix justus sit securus?

EVIL SPIRIT.

From thee the saints in bliss
Their faces turn away.
To reach their hands to thee
Makes the pure shudder! Woe!

CHOIR.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?

MARGARET.

Neighbour! Your smelling-bottle!
[*Swoons.*

SCENE V.—WALPURGIS NIGHT.

THE HARZ MOUNTAINS. DISTRICT OF SCHIRKE AND ELEND.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Do you not wish, you had a broomstick, friend?
Oh, for a he-goat, rough, and tough, and strong!
We're still a long way from our journey's end.

FAUST.

This knotted staff's enough for me, so long
As I feel fresh upon my legs. What boots
To cut our journey short, howe'er it lags?
To thread this maze of valleys all at rest,
And then to clamber up to yonder crags,
From which the fountain ever-babbling shoots,
'Tis this which gives our journey all its zest.
The birchen spray is kindling with the spring,
And even the dull pines feel its quickening;
Shall it not also make our limbs more brisk?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Of that I feel no trace, nor will.
My body is all winter-chill.
Would that our path lay over frost and snow!
How sadly the red moon's imperfect disk
Moves up the sky with her belated glow,
And gives so bad a light, that we run bump
At every step against some rock or stump!
By your permission, I will hail
A Will-o'-Wisp. Out there I see
One burning merrily. So ho,
My friend! Will you before us sail?
Why will you waste your lustre so?
Pray be so kind, as light us upward here.

WILL-O'-WISP.

Out of respect I'll struggle to repress,
And hope I may, my natural flightiness.
A zigzag course we're rather apt to steer.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha, ha! He fain would imitate mankind.
Hold, in the devil's name, straight on, or, mind,
I'll blow your flickering life out!

WILL-O'-WISP.

'Twould appear,
That you are master of the household here,
So I'll essay to do your bidding rightly.
But mind! the mountain's magic-mad to-day,
And if a Will-o'-Wisp's to light the way,
You must not deal with him too tightly.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, *and* WILL-O'-WISP.

(*In alternating song.*)

Now we're in the sphere, I deem,
Of enchantment and of dream.
Lead us on, thou meteor-gleam,
Lead us rightly, and apace,
To the deserts vast of space!
See, only see, tree after tree,
How thick and swift behind they drift,
And crag and cliff make mop and mow.
And the long-snouted crags below,
Hark, how they snort, and how they blow!

Over moss and over stone,
Brook and brooklet race along.
What noise is that, around, above?
Hark, again! The sounds of song,
Lovers lamenting and making moan,
Loosing their laden hearts in sighs,
Voices we knew in the days that are flown,
When to live and to love were paradise?
All that we hope for, all that we love,
Throbs in the heart and thrills in the brain,
And fabling Echo, like the tale
Of olden times, o'er hill and dale
Reiterates the strain!

Tu-whit! Tu-whoo! More near, more near!
The jargon rises shrill and clear.
The owl, the pewit, and the jay,
All awake and abroad are they?
Be these salamanders there,
Long of leg, and huge of paunch,
That go striding through the brakes?
Lo, the great roots, gaunt and bare,
How from rock and bank they branch!
Wreathed like intertangling snakes,
In coils fantastic, through the air
They stretch to scare and to ensnare us,
From wart-like knots, with life instinct,
Darting polyp-fibres, linked
To enmesh and overbear us!
And see! the mice of every hue,
How they hustle, and how they speed,
Through the moss and through the heather!
Up and down the fireflies, too,
Flit and flicker, thronged together,
To bewilder and mislead!

But what means this glamour? Say,
Which is moving, we or they?
All about us seems to spin,
Rocks and trees, that gape and grin,
And Will-o'-Wisps, that, low and high,
Flare, and flash, and multiply.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Grasp my skirt, and hold it tight,
Here's a central peak, where we
May with eyes of wonder see
The mountain all with Mammon bright.

FAUST.

Through chasm and cleft how strangely gleams

A dull red light as of the dawn!
Down to the very depths it streams,
Where gloomiest abysses yawn.
There clouds and exhalations rise,
Here from the mists light glimmers soft,
Now like fine threads it winds and plies,
Then like a fountain leaps aloft.
Here in a hundred veins it coils,
For many a rood, the valley through,
There, shut within yon gorge's toils,
In sparkles scatters out of view.
Near us, like sprinkled sand of gold,
Are flame-sparks strewn upon the air,
And now, through all its height, behold,
The wall of rocks is kindling there!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Doth not Sir Mammon rarely light
His halls up for our sports to-night?
Lucky, you've seen it! I can hear,
Even now his boisterous guests are near.

FAUST.

How through the air the storm-blast raves and hisses!
It smites my neck, shock after shock.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You'll have to clutch the old ribs of the rock,
Or it will hurl you down to yon abysses.
O'er the midnight a thick mist broods.
Hark to the crashing through the woods!
To and fro, the boughs between,
The affrighted owlets flit.
Hark, the columns, how they split,
Of the palaces evergreen!
Hear the branches straining, snapping,

The giant tree-stems' mighty moaning,
The huge roots yawning, creaking, groaning;
Each across the other clapping,
Down they crash, and thunder all,
In mad and intertangled fall:
And through the cliffs with ruin strewn
The wild winds whiz, and howl, and moan.
Voices o'er us dost thou hear?
Voices far, and voices near?
All the mountain-range along
Streams a raving Witches' song.

WITCHES (*in chorus*).

The Witches are for the Brocken bound, —
The stubble is yellow, the blade is green,—
There shall a mighty throng be found,
Sir Urian seated aloft between.
Right over stock and stone they go,
Beldame and buck-goat, hilloah, hilloah!

A VOICE.

Old Baubo comes alone; astride
A farrow-sow behold her ride!

CHORUS.

To whom is honour due be honour!
Dame Baubo, advance, and lead the way!
A sturdy sow, with a dame upon her,
Is guide full meet for our troop so gay.

A VOICE.

What road came you by?

A VOICE.

By Ilsenstein.
I peeped, as I passed on my midnight prowl.

Into the nest of the hornèd owl!
And didn't she open her eyes on mine?

A Voice.

To hell with you, old weason-face!
Why are you riding at such a pace?

A Voice.

She grazed me as she passed. Just see,
The jade, how she has wounded me!

Witches' Chorus.

The way is wide, the way is long.
Is this not a jolly bedlam throng?
The pitchfork pricks, and the broom it scratches,
The babe is stifled, the mother she hatches.

Wizards. Half-Chorus.

We crawl like snails; the womenkind
Have left us far and far behind;
For woman, when to hell she rides,
Outstrips us by a thousand strides.

Other Half.

That's not at all the way we view it.
She takes a thousand strides to do it,
But, post howe'er she may, the man
Does it at once in a single span.

A Voice (*above*).

From Felsensee, come away, come away!

Voices (*from below*).

Up through the sky we fain would fly.
We've washed, and we're clean, as clean may be,
But barren for evermore are we.

BOTH CHORUSES.

The wind is down, and the stars are flown,
The wan moon hides her woe-worn face,
Along the dark shoot flame and spark,
To mark the wizard's roaring chase.

VOICE (*from below*).

Hold hard! Hold hard! Behind I'm left.

VOICE (*from above*).

Who is calling there from the rocky cleft?

A VOICE (*from below*).

Oh, take me with you! Three hundred year
Have I been climbing, climbing here,
But never can I the summit gain.
To be with my fellows I were fain.

BOTH CHORUSES.

Besom and broomstick, he-goat and prong,
All are good to whisk you along;
And surely the wight is in doleful plight,
Who cannot mount in the air to-night.

DEMI-WITCH (*from below*).

I've been tottering after this many a day,
And the rest are already so far away!
No peace have I at home, and here
I'm likely to light on no better cheer.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

'Tis ointment puts heart in the witches' crew.
Any fluttering rag for a sail will do,
Any trough make a stout ship to scud through the sky,
Who flies not to-night, he will never fly.

BOTH CHORUSES.

And when you have got to the mountain's crest,
Drop to the ground, where it likes you best.
And cover the moorland all round about
With the weltering swarm of your wizard rout!
[*They descend.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here's jamming, jolting, jabbering, justling,
Here's whizzing, whirling, babbling, bustling!
Here's flashing, sparkling, stinking, burning.
All things topsy-turvy turning!
The real hurly-burly, which is
Very meat and drink to witches!
Stick close by me, or we shall be
Swept asunder presently.
Where art thou?

FAUST (*in the distance*).

Here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha! Steady, steady!
What! torn away so far already?
Then is it time, I should make clear
My right as lord and master here.
Room for Sir Voland, room, I say!
My most sweet people, please, make way!
Here, doctor, here, take hold of me,
And let us at a bound get free
Of this wild rabble, and its din there.
'Tis too mad even for such as I.
There's something shining there hard by,
With lustre quite peculiar. Look!
Yon bushes seem a quiet nook.
Come, come along! Let us slip in there.

FAUST.

Spirit of contradiction! Well, well, lead the way!
Yet 'tis a splendid notion, I must say;
To Brocken we on Mayday night repair,
To keep aloof from all, when we get there.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What many-coloured flames! Just see,
There is a jovial company!
One's not alone, however few the folk.

FAUST.

Up yonder I would rather be.
Already flames and whirling smoke
I see ascending, and the throng,
That to the Evil Spirit's lair
Tumultuously sweeps along!
There would I be, for surely there
Will many a riddle be untied.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And many a riddle be knotted, too.
Let the great world go brawling on! Aside
We'll tarry here in quiet out of view.
With men the custom is of ancient date,
To make themselves small worlds within the great.
Young witches yonder I espy,
As naked as their mothers bore 'em,
And old ones, too, that, wisely shy,
Have veiled their charms with true decorum.
For my sake, now, be civil to them all.
The pastime's great, the trouble small.
Hark! Instruments a-tuning! Curse
Upon their blowing and their scraping!
Come on, come on! There's no escaping;

We must submit, or suffer worse.
I'll step before and introduce you; so
Will under further obligation lay you.
Look here, look here, my friend! How say you?
No squeezed-up shabby ball-room this, no, no!
Look onward there! You scarce can see the end.
A hundred fires are burning, row on row.
They dance, they chat, cook, drink, make love. In short.
Where, let me ask, will you find better sport?

FAUST.

Will you, in ushering us into their revel,
Present yourself as wizard, or as devil?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My general rule's to play incognito.
On gala-days, however, one may show
One's orders. With no garter am I decked,
But here the horse hoof's held in high respect.
Dost see yon snail come crawling up? 'Tis clear,
Her tentacles already have found out,
There's something more than common hereabout.
Even if I would forswear myself, I could not here.
But come along! From fire to fire we'll go:
I will the pander be, and you the beau.

[*To some, who are seated round expiring embers.*

Old gentleman, what is the reason, pray,
You sit so far from all the mirth away?
I'd think, you showed more wisdom, if I found you
Right in the thick of it in jovial mood,
With lots of brisk young wenches dancing round you.
At home one has enough of solitude.

GENERAL.

Who can trust a nation's truth,
Though from ruin he may save her?

For, just as with the women, youth
With them stands always first in favour

MINISTER.

Folks now have all gone far astray.
The good old times! that is my creed.
For when we'd things all our own way,
That was the golden age indeed.

PARVENU.

No fools were we, yet I allow,
We often did the things we should not.
But all's turned topsy-turvy now,
Just when we most desired it would not.

AUTHOR.

Who, as a rule, will now read aught,
That has the least pretence to thought?
And, as for the young people, they
Grow sillier, perter, every day.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*who all at once appears very old*).

Mankind, I feel I may assume,
Are ripened for the day of doom,
Now that I here for the last time
The Mountain of the Witches climb:
My cask runs muddy, and one sees
The world is also on the lees.

A WITCH (*who traffics in old odds and ends*).

Come, gentle folks, don't pass me so!
Why throw a chance like this away?
Observe my wares; so choice a show
Is what you don't see every day.
Within my shop, sirs, there is nought—
A shop like it you'll nowhere find—

But has its proper mischief wrought
Unto the world and to mankind.
Here is no dagger, but has run with gore;
No chalice, but from it has flowed
Hot shrivelling poison through each pore,
Which, till it came, with health had glowed:
No trinket, but to shame it has betrayed
Some woman born to be beloved; no blade,
But has been drawn for treasons fell and black,
Or stabbed a foe, perchance, behind his back.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Coz, coz, you're quite behind the age.
For what it wants you have no feeling.
Now novelties are all the rage;
In these, then, you should take to dealing!

FAUST.

Grant that I may not lose my wits! Was e'er
In all the universe so strange a Fair!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To reach the top the whole mad throng are striving.
'Tis you are driven, and yet you think you're driving

FAUST.

Who, who is that?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Observe her well.

'Tis Lilith.

FAUST.

Who?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Adam's first wife. Beware
Of her and of her beauteous hair!
Wherein she doth all women else excel.
A young man once let her with that ensnare,
It is a mesh he'll find it hard to tear.

FAUST.

Yonder sit two, an old witch and a young;
But now they danced like mad, and wheeled, and flung.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No rest from that to-night! They start anew.
Come, take a partner! We must foot it, too.

FAUST (*dancing with a young witch*).

I dreamed a dream, was sweet to see;
In it I saw an apple-tree,
And on it shone fair apples two,
I climbed to pluck them, where they grew.

THE FAIR ONE.

From Eden downwards, you've, in sooth,
For pippins had a liquorish tooth.
It glads my very heart to know,
That such within my garden grow.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*with the old one*).

I dreamed a dream, was wild to see;
In it I saw a cloven tree.
It had a * * * * * *
* * as it was, I fancied it.

THE OLD ONE.

With deepest reverence I salute
The cavalier of the horse's foot.

If at a * * he does not scare,
Let him * * * straight prepare.

PROKTOPHANTASMIST.

Confound your impudence! Have we to you
Not proved long since by reasons most complete.
That spirits never stand on ordinary feet?
Yet here you dance, as common mortals do.

THE FAIR ONE (*dancing*).

What brings him to our ball, now?

FAUST (*dancing*).

Oh!

He's everywhere, and always so.
What others dance he must apprise.
Each step, he cannot criticise,
In his conceit's no step at all.
The thing, that most excites his gall,
Is onward motion. If you would
In circles keep revolving still,
As he does in his ancient mill,
No doubt he'd say, all right and good!
And that especially, provided
You owned you were by his opinion guided.

PROKTOPHANTASMIST.

Still at it! 'Tis past bearing! Vanish hence!
What! in these days of high intelligence!
This devilish crew despise all rule. We boast
Our great good sense, yet Tegel has its ghost.
The years, heaven knows how many, I have been
Sweeping out such delusions piece by piece!
But never will the human mind be clean.
'Tis labour lost—such follies never cease.

THE FAIR ONE.

Then cease to bore us here. Give place!

PROKTOPHANTASMIST.

I tell you, spirits, to your face,
I'll not endure this spirit-thrall!
My spirit cannot manage it at all.
[*The dancing proceeds.*
No one to-night, I see, my word regards.
My journey for my pains have I;
And still I hope, before I die,
To put a curb on devils and on bards.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Straight in a puddle he will squat;
He always soothes himself with that.
And when the leeches have grown plump
Upon the juices of his rump,
He's cured, and without more ado,
Of spirits, and of spirit, too.
[*To* FAUST, *who has left the dance.*
Why have you left the pretty wench, that sang
So sweetly to you in the dance?

FAUST.

Ugh! from her mouth a red mouse sprang,
Even while she sang.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A lucky chance!
About such things we're not too nice.
It was not grey, let that suffice.
Who cares for trifles such as this,
When on the very brink of bliss?

FAUST.

Then I saw—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What?

FAUST.

Mephisto, seest thou there,
Far off, alone, a girl, pale, pale and sweet?
She drags herself along, and with the air
Of one that makes her way with shackled feet.
It cannot, cannot be; and yet
She minds me of sweet Margaret.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Don't look that way! It can do nought but scaith.
'Tis but a magic shape, a lifeless wraith.
It is not well to meet such anywhere.
It curdles up man's blood by its cold stare,
And by it he is turned to stone wellnigh.
Thou'st heard, of course, of the Medusa.

FAUST.

Ay.
The eyes of one that's dead, in sooth, are those,
Which there has been no loving hand to close.
That is the breast, Margaret gave up to me,
Those the sweet limbs, whose touch was ecstasy.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou ready gull, therein the sorcery lies.
To all that love she wears the loved one's guise.

FAUST.

What bliss! What torture! From that stare
Myself away I cannot tear.

How strangely does a thin red line,
No thicker than a knife's back, fleck
The marble of her lovely neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Right! I too see it, thin and fine!
Beneath her arm, too, she can carry
Her head, for Perseus cut it off, poor soul.
Pshaw! Evermore the visionary!
Come on with me to yonder knoll;
The Prater's self is not more gay,
And, if I'm not bewitched, I see
A real theatre. What's doing, hey?

SERVIBILIS.

They recommence immediately.
'Tis a new piece, the last of seven. To play
That number is the custom here.
The piece was written by an amateur,
And amateurs perform it. You'll, I'm sure,
Forgive me, if I disappear;
It is my office, on these days,
The curtain, sirs, *en amateur* to raise.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'm truly charmed to see you here:
The Blocksberg's just your proper sphere.

WALPURGIS NIGHT'S DREAM;

OR, OBERON AND TITANIA'S GOLDEN WEDDING.

Intermezzo.

Manager of the Theatre.

Carnival to-day we hold,
Mieding's children true we,
All our scenery, mountain old,
Valley dank and dewy!

Herald.

Golden is the wedding, when
Fifty years have rolled on,
But, the feud once over, then
Golden it will hold on.

Oberon.

Fairies, if ye haunt this ground,
Here do homage duly,
For your king and queen are bound
In love's fetters newly.

Puck.

Puck, when he begins to spin,
And foot it in the dingle,
After him troop hundreds in,
With his mirth to mingle.

Ariel.

Ariel with his silver song
Divine fills all the air, too.

Many frights to hear it throng,
Many that are fair, too.

OBERON.

Learn ye, whom the marriage-bond
Has not made one-hearted,
If you'd make a couple fond,
Only have them parted.

TITANIA.

Is he all snarl, and she all whim,
Upon them seize instanter,
Away to the South Pole with him,
And at the North Pole plant her!

ORCHESTRA (*tutti fortissimo*).

Fly's proboscis, midge's nose,
And what to these akin are,
Frog and shrilling cricket, those
Purveyors of our din are.

SOLO.

See where, a soap-bubble sack,
The bagpipe, it is coming!
Hark the Schnecke-Schnicke-Schnack
Through its snub-nose humming!

SPIRIT (*that is fashioning itself*).

Paunch of toad and spider's foot,
With little wings below 'em,
Make not, 'tis true, a little brute,
But make a little poem.

A PAIR OF LOVERS.

Tiny step and lofty leap
Through honeydew and vapours;

Yet up in air you do not sweep,
Despite of all your capers.

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

Is this Glamour, to fade anon?
Shall I believe my sight, to
See the fair god Oberon
Here with us to-night, too?

ORTHODOX.

No claws! No tail! And yet, I wis,
Undoubtedly the fact is,
That, like the gods of Greece, he is
A devil in his practice.

NORTHERN ARTIST.

My things at present, to be sure,
Are sketchy and unsteady,
Still I for the Italian tour
Betimes am getting ready.

PURIST.

'Tis ill luck brings me here; this crew,
Their din grows loud and louder,
And of the whole witch-medley two,
And only two, wear powder.

YOUNG WITCH.

Powder is, like petticoat,
For beldames old and ugly,
So I sit naked on my goat,
And show my body smugly.

MATRON.

With you we're too well-bred by far
To squabble on the spot, Miss;

But, young and tender as you are,
I hope that you may rot, Miss.

LEADER OF THE BAND.

Fly's proboscis, midge's nose,
These nude folk buzz not round so,
Frog and shrilling cricket, close
In, keep time, and sound so!

WEATHERCOCK (*towards one side*).

More brilliant throng could heart desire?
All brides, young, fresh, and active!
And younkers, full of blood and fire,
A medley most attractive.

WEATHERCOCK (*towards the other side*).

Well, if the ground here shall not gape,
These all to swallow plump down,
Right off, their antics to escape,
I'll into hell-pit jump down.

XENIEN.

See us here as insects! Ha!
With nebs small, sharp, and slitting,
To render Satan, our papa,
High homage, as befitting.

HENNINGS.

See, how they crowd, and cheer the fun
Of every kind that's started!
They'll even say, ere all is done,
That they are kindly-hearted!

MUSCYET.

Itself among this witches' rout
My fancy gladly loses;

For I could manage them, no doubt,
More readily than the Muses.

CI-DEVANT GENIUS OF THE TIME.

Cling to my skirts! Whate'er betide,
Our worth will somewhere class us;
The Blocksberg's summit's broad and wide,
Like Germany's Parnassus.

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

Who is yon stiff starched fellow, say,
With stride so pompous walking?
He sniffs and sniffs where'er he may,
"'Tis Jesuits, he is stalking!"

CRANE.

In troubled streams, as well as clear,
'Tis my delight to angle;
So you see pious people here
With devils mingle-mangle.

WORLDLING.

Yes, nothing can the pious daunt,
This place as good as any;
Upon the Blocksberg here they plant
Conventicles a-many.

DANCER.

Hark, far-off drums! Sure, some new throng
Is in the distance looming!
Oh, never mind! It is among
The reeds the bitterns booming!

DANCING MASTER.

Oh, how they fling, and jig, and flop,
Each capering as he best can,

The crooked skip, the clumsy hop,
To foot it, as the rest can.

FIDDLER.

Though mingling thus, this rabble crew
For hate would like to rend them;
As Orpheus' lyre together drew
The beasts, the bagpipes blend them.

DOGMATIST.

Critic or sceptic shall not throw
A doubt on my ideals;
The devil must be something, though,
Or how could devils be else?

IDEALIST.

The fancy, that doth work in me,
For once much too intense is;
In sooth, if I be all I see,
To-night I've lost my senses.

REALIST.

Oh, entities a world of strife
And torment do entail me;
Here for the first time in my life
I find my footing fail me.

SUPERNATURALIST.

I'm quite enchanted with this scene,
Its babble and confusions,
For as to angels I can e'en
From devils draw conclusions.

SCEPTIC.

Upon the flamelet's track they roam,
And think the treasure near is;

Here I am perfectly at home,
For doubt the devil's fere is.

LEADER OF THE BAND.

Frog and shrilling cricket, those
Confounded dilettanti!
Fly's proboscis, midge's nose,
You're fine musicanti!

THE KNOWING ONES.

Sans souci, they call us so,
Us jolly dogs, that troll out;
To walk on foot is now no go,
So on our heads we stroll out.

THE MALADROIT ONES.

Ah! many rare good things, 'tis true,
We had of yore a hand in;
But, oh! our pumps are danced quite through,
And we're on bare soles standing!

WILL 'O THE WISPS.

We come fresh from our native haunts,
From bogs and from morasses,
But who, of all these gay gallants,
In glitter can surpass us?

STARFLAKE.

I shot down hither from on high,
A star-fire sheen all o'er me;
Now prostrate on the ground I lie,
Who'll to my legs restore me?

THE MASSIVE ONES.

Room! Room! A lane there! Clear the way!
The grass snaps, where we jump once:

Lo! spirits come; but spirits they,
With bodies, ay, and plump ones!

PUCK.

Tread not, I beg, so heavily,
Like young calves elephantine;
And let stout Puck the plumpest be
To-night our fairy haunt in!

ARIEL.

If you have wings, boon Nature's gift,
Then, ere our revel closes,
Away with me by grove and clift
Up to yon hill of roses!

ORCHESTRA (*pianissimo*).

On trailing cloud, and wreathèd mist,
A sudden light has kindled;
Trees, sedges whist, a breeze has kissed,
And all to air have dwindled!

END OF ACT FOURTH.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Gloomy Day. Open Country.

Faust, Mephistopheles.

Faust.

In Misery! In Despair! After long wandering wretched to and fro, to be now in prison! She, that gentle ill-starred being, immured as a malefactor in a dungeon, to wait a frightful doom! And it has come to this! to this! Treacherous, worthless Spirit, and thou hast kept this from me!—Ay, stand there, stand! Roll thy fiendish eyes in savage wrath! Stand and defy me by thy intolerable presence! A prisoner! in irremediable misery! Given over to wicked spirits, and to the merciless judgment of men! And me, me wert thou all the while lulling into forgetfulness, with vapid dissipations hiding her hourly increasing wretchedness from me, and leaving her to perish without help.

Mephistopheles.

She is not the first.

Faust.

Hound! Detestable monster! Change him, thou infinite Spirit, change the reptile once more into that semblance of a dog, in which he often delighted to gambol before me at night, to double himself up at the feet of the harmless wayfarer, and, if he fell, to fasten his

fangs upon his shoulders. Change him again into his favourite shape, that he may crawl on his belly in the dust before me, that I may spurn him with my feet, accursèd as he is!—Not the first!—Wo! Wo! Not by the soul of man is it to be comprehended, how more than one human creature has sunk to such a depth of misery,—how the first did not in its writhing death-agony make satisfaction for all the rest before the eyes of Him that evermore forgives! The misery of this single soul pierces my very marrow, eats into my life; thou grinnest complacently at the fate of thousands!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now are we once more at our wit's end, strung to that pitch, at which the reason of you mortals snaps. Why do you make fellowship with us, if you cannot be one of us out and out? Will you fly, yet are not proof against dizziness? Did we force ourselves on you, or you on us?

FAUST.

Gnash not thy ravening teeth against me thus! I'm sick of it!—Great and sublime Spirit, thou who didst deign to reveal thyself to me, thou who knowest my heart and my soul, why link me to this infamous yoke-fellow, who feeds on mischief, and battens on destruction?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Hast done?

FAUST.

Save her! or woe to thee! The awfullest of curses smite thee for myriads of years!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I cannot loose the bonds of the avenger, nor undo his

bolts.—Save her!—Who caused her ruin? I or thou? [FAUST *looks wildly round.*] Wouldst grasp the thunder? 'Tis well, it was not given to you miserable mortals. To crush the first innocent man he comes across, that is just the tyrant's way of making a clearance for himself out of a difficulty.

FAUST.

Take me where she is! She shall be free!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And the danger which you run? Remember the guilt of blood, shed by your hand, still lies upon the town. Avenging spirits hover over the spot where the victim fell, and lie in wait for the returning murderer!

FAUST.

This too from thee? A world's murder and death upon thee, Monster! Conduct me thither, I say, and set her free!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I will conduct thee! Hear what I can do! Have I all power in heaven and on earth? I will cast a glamour over the gaoler's senses; do you possess yourself of his keys, and bear her off with mortal hands. I shall watch outside. My magic horses shall be ready to carry you away. This much I can do.

FAUST.

Up and away!

SCENE II.—Night. Open Country.

Faust, Mephistopheles, *sweeping along on black horses.*

Faust.

What weave they yonder round the Ravenstone?

Mephistopheles.

Can't tell, what mess they have in hand.

Faust.

They wave up, they wave down, they are swaying and stooping.

Mephistopheles.

A Witches' Guild.

Faust.

They strew and make libation.

Mephistopheles.

Push on! Push on!

SCENE III.—A DUNGEON.

FAUST *with a bundle of keys, before a small iron door.*

FAUST.

I quake with a strange dread. The woe of all
Mankind possesses me. This is her cell!
Here does she lie behind this cold dank wall,
And all her crime was having loved too well.
Why do I hang back thus? Is't fear,
To think how I again shall see her?
Onward! Each moment's pause brings nearer her death-knell. [*Opening the lock. A voice is heard within singing.*

My mother, the wanton,
She took my life,
My father, the rogue,
Ate me up with his knife!
My wee little sister,
She picked up my bones,
And laid them to cool
All under the stones.
Then I turned to a woodbird,
So bonnie to see?
Fly away, fly away
To the woodland with me!

FAUST (*opens the door*).

She little dreams, that her beloved is near,
The rattling chains, the rustling straw can hear.
[*He enters.*

MARGARET (*hiding her face on her pallet*).

They come! Oh bitter death! Oh woe is me!

FAUST (*softly*).

Hush! hush! I come to set thee free!

MARGARET (*throwing herself at his feet*).

If thou be'st human, feel for my distress!

FAUST.

Thou'lt wake the sentinels! These cries repress.
[*Takes hold of her fetters to unlock them.*

MARGARET (*on her knees*).

Who, hangman, who has given you right,
To treat me thus—or who could give?
You fetch me, while 'tis yet midnight.
Oh pity me, and let me live!
Is daybreak to-morrow not soon enough? [*Rises.*
Oh, I am still so young, so young,
And yet must die!
Fair, too, they told me, once was I,
And that was my undoing. He was nigh,
My own dear love, in those sweet hours.
But now he's far away from me.
My wreath is torn, and scattered are its flowers.
Seize me not with a grasp so rough!
Spare me, what have I ever done to thee?
Oh let me not in vain implore!
I never saw thee all my days before.

FAUST.

Can I survive this miserable hour?

MARGARET.

Now I am wholly in your power,
To do with me whatever you think best;
But to the babe first let me give the breast!
All through the night I coaxed and stilled it:

They took it from me to vex my brain,
And now they say, I would have killed it,
And never shall I be blithe again.
The people, they sing songs about me,
To sting me, and flout me.
Ah! they mean me unkindly by it;
An old tale ends so. Who bade them apply it?

FAUST (*flings himself on the ground*).

Thy lover here lies prostrate at thy feet,
To rend these miserable bonds, my sweet!

MARGARET (*throws herself by his side*).

Oh let us kneel to call upon the saints!
Look! Look! Under the stair!
Under the door there,
The fires of hell,
They seethe, and they roar there!
The fiend within,
Furious and fell,
Is making a din!

FAUST.

Margaret! Margaret!

MARGARET (*listening*).

That was my loved one's voice!
[*She springs up—her fetters fall off.*
Where is he? Where? I heard him call.
I'm free! I'm free! Let no one try
To stay me! On his neck I'll fall,
Upon his bosom lie!
He called on Margaret! stood there at the door!
Through all hell's howling and its roar,
Through devilish scoff, and gibe, and groan,
I recognised the sweet, the loving tone!

FAUST.

'Tis I!

MARGARET.

Thou, thou! Oh say it once again!
[*Clasping him.*
'Tis he, 'tis he! Where now are all my pains?
The anguish of the dungeon? Of the chains?
'Tis thou! Thou com'st to rescue me! Oh then,
Then I am saved. Oh, now again
Along the street I wander free,
Where first I met with thee;
Am in the cheerful garden, by the gate,
Where for thee I and Martha wait.

FAUST (*trying to force her away*).

Come with me! Come!

MARGARET.

Oh stay!
I like so much to stay, love, where thou stay'st.

FAUST.

Quick, quick, away!
Oh, if thou wilt not haste,
We shall rue dearly the delay!

MARGARET.

How's this?
Thou canst no longer kiss?
Parted from me so short a time, and yet
Thou couldst the way to kiss forget?
Why do I grow so sad upon thy bosom now,
When from thy words, thy looks, in other days
A whole heaven flooded me, and thou
Didst kiss, as thou wouldst stifle me, always?

Kiss me, or I'll kiss thee! [*Embraces him.*
Oh, woe is me!
Thy lips are cold, they chill me through.
How! not one word! Where hast thou left
Thy love? Oh, who
Has thy poor Margaret of that bereft?
[*Turns away from him.*

FAUST.

Come, follow me! Take courage, oh my sweet!
I'll clasp thee to my heart, when this is o'er,
A thousand times more fondly than before,
So thou'lt but follow me. Hence, I entreat!

MARGARET (*turning to him*).

And is it thou, then, thou? And is this true?

FAUST.

Oh yes! Come! Come!

MARGARET.

My chains thou wilt undo,
Take me again into thy breast!—So, so!
How comes it, that thou shrinkest not from me?
Oh my sweet love, dost thou, then, know,
Whom thou art setting free?

FAUST.

Come! Come! The night's already on the wane!

MARGARET.

My mother I have slain,
And drowned my child! To thee
The little one was given, and me;
To thee, love, too! 'Tis thou! Oh, can it be?

Give me thy hand! Yes! Yes! these are no dreams,—
Thine own dear hand. But, woe is me! 'tis wet!
How! dripping, dripping yet?
How it doth run!
Oh wipe it off! Meseems,
There's blood upon't! Ah God! what hast thou done?
Put up thy sword! Oh sheathe it, I implore!

FAUST.

Let what is past be past! I can no more.
Each word thou speak'st is death to me.

MARGARET.

No, I must go, but thou must stay.
I will describe the graves to thee:
To-morrow thou to them must see
By break of day.
For mother the best place provide.
Then to her lay my brother nearest;
Me a little to one side,
But not too far off, dearest!
And the little one on my breast to the right!
No one else shall lie by me.
Ah, love, to nestle up to thee,
It was a sweet, a dear delight!
But that I never again shall know.
I have a feeling as if I must
Hang, cling to thee, and thou didst thrust
Me back—back—back! Yet, wherefore so?
Thou art, thou lookest, so good, so kind!

FAUST.

If such thou feel'st I am, come, come, love!

MARGARET.

Where?

Out yonder?

FAUST.

Out to the open air!

MARGARET.

If the grave is there,
If death is waiting, come! 'Tis best.
From here into the bed of everlasting rest.
And not a step beyond! Ah me!
Thou'rt going? Henry, if I might with thee!

FAUST.

Thou canst! Decide! See, open stands the door!

MARGARET.

I dare not go. For me all hope is o'er.
What boots to fly? Beset with spies am I.
It is so hard to have to beg your way,
And with an evil conscience harder still;
It is so hard in a strange land to stray,
And they will catch me, do whate'er I will.

FAUST.

Then I remain with thee!

MARGARET.

Fly, fly!
Thy child will die!
Save it! oh save it!
Away! away!
Keep to the path,
Up by the brook,
And into the wood beyond!
Strike to the left
By the plank in the pond!
Quick! Seize it, seize it!

It tries to rise!
It is struggling yet.
Help! Help!

FAUST.

Be calm! be still!
Only one step, and thou art free!

MARGARET.

Oh, were we only past the hill!
There sits my mother upon a stone;
My temples throb with an icy dread.
There sits my mother upon a stone,
And to and fro she waves her head:
Her eyes are set, she makes no moan,
Her hand is heavy as lead.
She slept so long, no more she'll wake;
She slept, that we our delight might take;
That was a happy time!

FAUST.

Thou'rt deaf to all remonstrance, prayer.
And I perforce must bear thee hence.

MARGARET.

Unhand me! Cruel one, forbear!
I will endure no violence.
Lay not this murderous grasp on me.
Time was, I gave up all to pleasure thee!

FAUST.

The day is breaking! Darling! Darling!

MARGARET.

Ay!
The day, indeed! The last day draweth nigh.

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